WESTWARD FROM RIO

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Stirling Dickinson

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PERU • BOLIVIA • BRAZIL
LIMA
HUANCAYO
MACHU PICHU
CUZCO
PISCO
TRINIDAD
TITICACA
LA PAZ
COCHABAMBA
MOLLENDO
SUCRE
POTOSI
CAMPO GRANDE
CAPAO BONITO
ITATIAYA
VILLAZON
CAMPANARIO
RIO DE JANEIRO
GUAYRA
SAO PAULO
IGUASSU
TUCUMAN
SAN IGNACIO
BAHIA
ARGENTINA

WESTWARD FROM RIO

HEATH BOWMAN &
STIRLING DICKINSON

WITH
100
BLOCK
PRINTS

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BY THE SAME AUTHORS

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GRATEFULLY DEDICATED TO

the *milreis,* the *boliviano,* and the *sol,*
whose low rates of exchange
enabled us to cross
a continent

◆

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SOUTHERN ACCENT

Spanish is not hard to pronounce. We've tried to make up a simple table for the few words we use in our book. Every letter in Portuguese, and all but *h* in Spanish, is pronounced. Unless noted, words are accented on the next to last syllable when ending in a vowel, otherwise on the last syllable. The remaining consonants not listed approximate English. Try these examples:

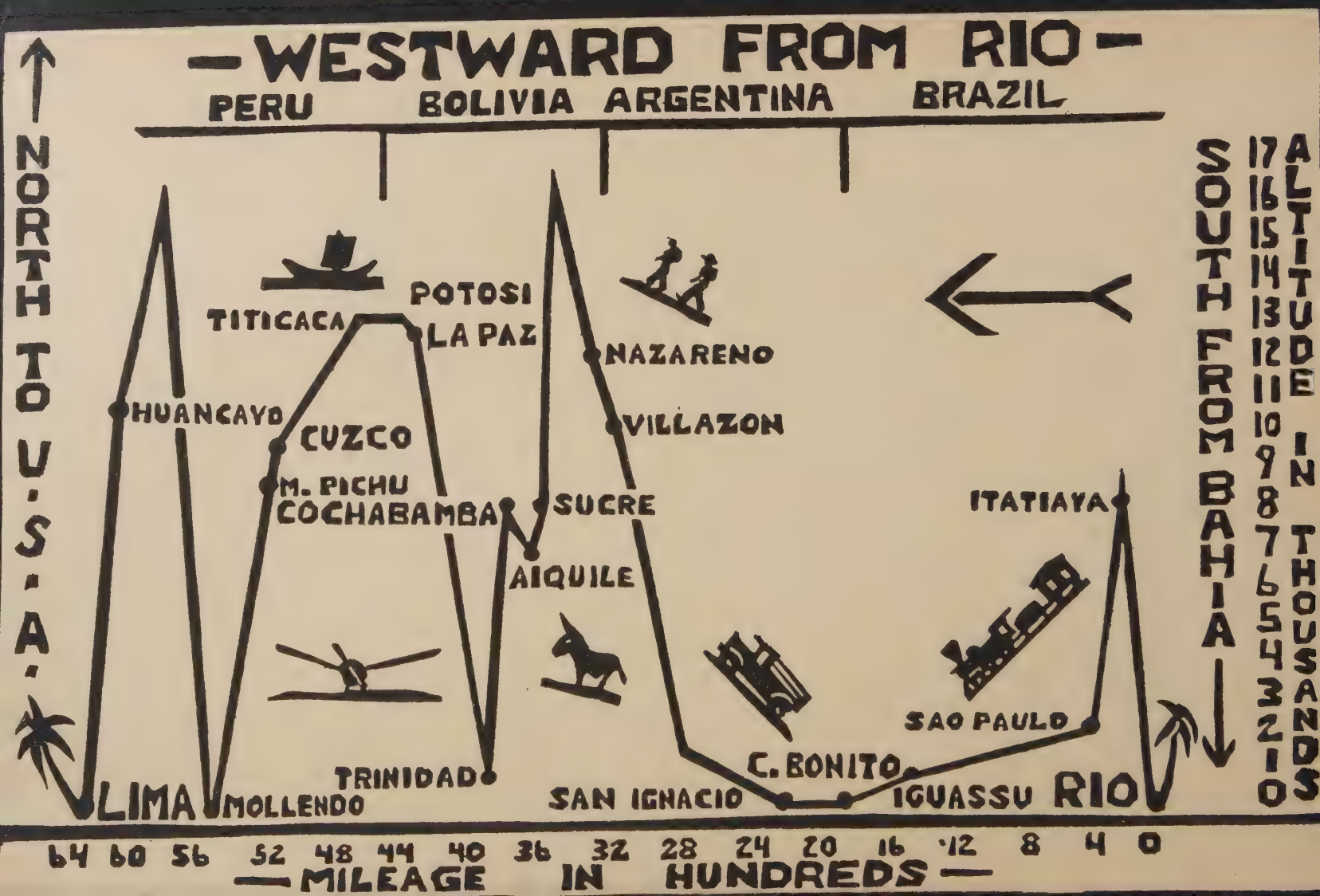
A — *plaza* — pláhs-sah
E — *señor* — sayn-nyáwr
espere — eh-spéhr-ray
I — *sí* — see
O — *no* — naw (a very short "aw" sound)
U — *usted* — oos-té(d) (*u* as in "rule")
C — *cantina* — kahn-teén-nah (like *k* before all but *e* and *i*)
centavo — sen-táh-voh
G — *gato* — gáh-toh (like hard *g*; like *h* before *e* and *i*)
J — *junta* — hóon-tah: Spanish
cerveja — sayr-váy-zhah: Portuguese
LL — *llama* — lyáh-mah (as in "million")
QU — *que* — keh
X — *México* — Máy-hee-koh
AI or AY — *hay* — eye
AO — *mamão* — mah-máw(ng): Portuguese; nasal sound
UA — *Tiahuanaco* — Tee-ah-wahn-áh-koh

Spanish or no Spanish, we heartily recommend a trip through South America. With our collective best wishes,

HEATH BOWMAN
STIRLING DICKINSON

PROLOGUE

THE ATLANTIC


WESTWARD FROM RIO
PERU
BOLIVIA
ARGENTINA
BRAZIL
NORTH TO U.S.A.
SOUTH FROM BAHIA
ALTITUDE IN THOUSANDS
17 16 15 14 13 12 11 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 0
POTOSI
TITICACA
LA PAZ
NAZARENO
VILLAZON
HUANCAYO
CUZCO
M. PICHU
COCHABAMBA
SUCRE
AIQUILE
ITATIAYA
SAO PAULO
C. BONITO
TRINIDAD
SAN IGNACIO
IGUASSU
LIMA
MOLLENDO
RIO
64 60 56 52 48 44 40 36 32 28 24 20 16 12 8 4 0
MILEAGE IN HUNDREDS

PROLOGUE

THE ATLANTIC

Thirty-two hundred miles out of New York. Eleven days of open sea: even the gulls left us as we skirted Bermuda. Now, somewhere near the equator. On a small Norwegian freighter, bound for Rio.

That is all we know. Far to the north, in an ice-bound city with the thermometer at twenty below zero, we first unfolded a map of South America. A tremendous continent. All right, pick a starting point — the fabulous Rio. "And from there?" a friend of ours naturally asked. Why, westward from Rio, across a continent. Carving our way through, not taking the easiest way; and yet taking the hard, the inconvenient, the uncomfortable, not for their sakes alone, but for the rewards they bring, the surprises. Although as yet we truly have no idea how we shall manage this westward course, or just what places we shall see. It sounded easy, at the time. . . .

We are standing on the upper deck with the Captain, our feet accustomed to the rise and fall, our bodies already tanned.

The flap-flap of the canvas awning, the smell of salt water and tar — part of us. The blue sky, the bluer sea, the air, the heat of the blazing sun and the light of it — these are our companions. For we are undergoing a fitting, extended introduction.

"Only four days more to the first port," the Captain remarks. He is thinking of the small army of officials who will descend upon him as soon as the ship casts anchor. His Nordic personality resents Brazilian ways. The people, he says, are dark-skinned, dirty, endlessly talkative, demanding, and not above eating meals on shipboard three times a day for the duration of our stay in Bahia. All characteristics which the Captain in no wise shares. "I guess I don't belong to the land at all. In fifteen years I haven't been home to Tonsberg for Christmas with my wife and two kids."

On some days he is silent, and when he asks us to have a vermouth and cognac, a long cool drink, with him, we know he needs companionship. That is why he has little Rombalú, a kind of terrier he bought on his last trip down. At such times he gradually becomes talkative about his adventures. Mention a port, and he's been there. The Far East is his love, although there's a small island off Malta in the Mediterranean where he'd like to spend his last days. Typhoons and doldrums are old stories to him. And the War? He was an officer on the first ship ever to be sunk by torpedoes.

Somewhere to the west of us now the Amazon is emptying its great waters into the ocean through a hundred deltas. Next to Rio, it is almost the only mysterious South American name we know; but though not explorers, except in a special, private sense, we propose to learn more about its countries. Before us is a strange new world, and we mean to cut through it — no one has yet suggested how. South America is more than a fringe of coastal cities, the points which tourists easily find. It is more than a jungle full of savage tribes. Somewhere between these two extremes lies a

great and exciting land. Coming upon it for the first time we feel it as our own personal discovery. . . .

We meet Bahia and South America in the midst of a sudden tropical squall: a prelude to Rio and a vast continent. To see, after two long weeks of ocean, the bright green land, the red tiled houses and the domes of some of Bahia's three hundred and sixty-five churches. Small sailboats with lateen, three-cornered sails, coming from the islands across the bay where cocoa and coconuts and tobacco are raised. Towards one point of land, palm trees thrusting into the sky; climbing up the ridge, the rich green of clustered banana trees.

In the launch that comes out to us the officials, all in white, are very dark-faced — there is a great deal of Negro blood along this coast — and they speak a language new to us: Portuguese. When we are released the agent takes us ashore. Approaching, we catch the first whiff of land. An imperceptible smell except to those whose nostrils have been full of salty

air: a smell compounded of green grass and fruit trees, of fires burning and food cooking. The smell of earth-peoples.

A tremendously busy port, yet lazy with the tropics, a certain enjoyable sloppiness which comes from abundance and luxuriousness. There is that careless, nonchalant feeling about the docks, about the fine tree-filled square and the basin for sailboats. At the big open saloon we have our first South American drink, gin *tonico,* a preparation which helps prevent malaria. Everyone is in white, often merely pyjamas and slippers; the black nigger women waddling by with great baskets on their heads. And beyond, the concrete elevator shaft which shoots us up to the top of the ridge, where the city proper commands a broad view of the harbor.

That night we eat steak *a Portugeza* in a restaurant overlooking the harbor lights, hearing a new language blaring from a dozen radios. And the next day we explore more of the hot streets with their innumerable narrow side-alleys and countless *plazas* — more properly *praças,* in Portuguese. Growing tired, we take an open tram out to the Ribeira, the palm-lined shore, through little streets with walled-in gardens full of purple bougainvillea, breadfruit, roses, and *mamão,* a pink melon. Beyond the houses we find a quiet beach, and swim in the warm salt water. Just above is an old convent which we think is deserted; later, we wonder if the girls had watched us. On the way home, we are informed by a conscientious conductor we must stand on the back platform of the tram because we have no coats. We might go barefooted, our suits might be in rags, but we must always wear coats — to eat, to ride, to go to the movies. . . . Out in the other direction from town, we later find a church which breaks through the palms to look down upon an unbelievably blue cove and the frothy surf beating against the rocks.

Yet Bahia is noted for the quantity rather than the quality of its churches, although some, like this one, command splen-

did views. Noted, too, for its cigars, the equal of even the touted Cuban ones; for its vast population of Negroes; for its street of prostitutes, leading up from the lower level. And for a cool restaurant, edged in by clothing shops and banks and exporters, where white-dressed business men and black-coated Germans eat their two-hour luncheons.

More than just a town to us: a first lesson in Brazil, in Portuguese, in South America. Three days to have our first taste. And it is fitting that we meet our Negro here. No ordinary native, although he looks like the worst tramp.

He addresses us in Russian, then German, although we do not look very much like moujiks or Nazis. He has only one shoe, the other foot is bare; a scraggly beard; a patched shirt and blue, torn trousers. We turn away. Just then a cultured Englishman addresses us. We turn to thank him — he is the Negro! Americans will never get over the shock of hearing black men speak with an English accent.

As he walks along with us, we find out that he comes from Trinidad, that he has been to India, where he was the only Negro ever to be a secret service man. "I should be somewhere today if I hadn't been a libertine," he remarks, and in such a calm and dignified way that we feel he may be condemning himself for once taking a drink. People turn and stare at the three of us; the Negro is evidently a water-front character. Yet the man has dignity and reserve — and a way of smiling, his cheeks becoming two black dumplings. . . . We spend all one day with him, going everywhere. In the late afternoon we stop for a drink of beer at a small bar on the Ribeira.

"Three tramps," he suddenly describes us. And, although the two of us have shoes, our traveling clothes are admittedly not a great deal better than his. "Would you ever believe I have addressed the Irish dail?" he goes on. "No, of course you would not. But listen. 'Lord Grey,' I said — " and he begins to recite a speech that long ago must have

been committed to memory. Smoothly and eloquently, ranging over the whole field of European politics, with a delivery and a choice of words which shames us.

Is the man a fraud? Possibly, of course. But we cannot believe so; we have learned that aloofness and fancy clothes are two things best left behind. . . .

On the last day, the Captain has come ashore with us and we have eaten dinner together, feeling very sporting in our new suits of white duck, which are less conspicuous than anything else in the tropics. He and the agent have gone off in one direction, we in another. The ship is to sail for Rio late this evening, after the last of the automobiles from Detroit, the kerosene from Bayonne, and the codfish from Newfoundland have been unloaded into the lighters. We are all to meet at the lower *praça* at ten, sharp.

There is nothing quite so fine as a tropical night. Just moving about in the warmth of it, conscious of all the smells and sounds which a harsh sun dominates during the day. Realizing that in two more days we shall be in Rio, ready to start westward. But a big dinner with cocktails and wine has made us more sleepy than aroused tonight, and we come presently to the *praça* by the ocean, with its few lights among the squat palms. We might as well wait for the Captain — and we lie down on the grass. All about us are black masses of buildings, closed after the working day. A young girl comes up, finally sits down beside us.

Her features are Negroid, yet she is only lightly brown. It is of course plain what her profession is, but though we show no interest, she stays anyway, just to talk. We carry on a limp conversation, largely in Spanish, which she understands but like most Brazilians cannot speak. At last she wanders away. . . .

We fall asleep. The next thing we know it is hours later, and someone is shaking us violently. Not a policeman, nor the Captain, but the agent. They have looked everywhere

for us, but they did not see us, lying in the shadows. The ship is to weigh anchor within the hour.

We are half asleep still as we run down to the basin. One small sailboat has a sailor aboard; yes, he will row us out. And so it is that the squeak of his oarlocks (for there is not a breath of wind), echoing across the silent bay, and the gentle drip, drip as he pulls back his oars at each stroke, are the things we remember best.

The sea voyage has prepared us well. We are ready to approach a continent, after this prologue at Bahia.

1.
BRAZIL

GREEN TROPICS AND RED EARTH

RIO DE JANEIRO

The first rays of the sun, coming through our porthole, awaken us. We feel the fresh, half-warm air of a tropical dawn. Suddenly we remember that today we are reaching our destination, and we rush up on deck in our pyjamas. The Captain is already there with his field glasses; very close on our starboard side rises the rocky headland, thrusting out of the depths of green water.

"You can just barely make out the cross," the Captain says, handing us the glasses. Low on the horizon, barely visible above the morning mist-clouds, we can see the figure of Christ, arms outstretched: in reality it is a colossus, high upon the mountain top, behind Rio.

Rio: at last, after five thousand miles, we are arriving. We are coming into the fabulous city of South America — and the only city we shall see for six thousand more miles, as we cross an unknown continent.

The moment we dock, we are lost in the maelstrom of a busy and dazzling city, facing a torrent of Portuguese with

our pocket dictionary. Every car and bus in town seems to be honking. We come out of the customs house and turn into the Avenida Rio Branco with its beautiful green trees. There seem to be thousands of people on the streets, going in and out of the modernistic buildings, everyone dressed in summer clothes, for it is even hotter here than at Bahia. Now we are in the very heart of the city. On each side of us, seen through the constant streams of buses and taxis, are sidewalk cafés already filling with people, though it is not quite noon.

The city is busy, and yet not with that preoccupation of a northern port like New York. Everyone is laughing. Not literally, perhaps, but we feel the gaiety. And as we come to the end of the Rio Branco, we swing around a palm-filled *praça,* onto the great ocean boulevard — for the shore line is so convoluted that we have driven the length of this avenue and have come upon the water again. Gigantic Madagascar palms line the balustrade that looks out upon a deep blue harbor, and framed by them we catch our second glimpse of the Pão de Assucar, the famous Sugar Loaf. The little hotel which we find on Flamingo Beach overlooks this wonder. It is ridiculously cheap here, about a dollar for our room and board, and there is a suggestion of good food in the air; even before we read the menu, which is as complete as a ship's bill of fare, we know that we shall be well fed. We must start right at the top. Under the soups is listed consommé, and beneath, something called *quente ou frio.* This last should be a more native dish. " Some of that," we tell the waiter.

" Yes, sirs," he answers not unreasonably, " but how would you like your consommé, *hot or cold?* "

Despite this mistake, we find Portuguese quite easy to read, though perhaps more like French to hear, with its nasal vowels. And even if we cannot understand the menu specialties, it is fun to order course after course, to find shrimps or lobster, broccoli and cold cuts and fruit salads appearing. And for dessert, a new and delicious dish: *crème de abacate*

— mashed avocado pear served cold, with sugar and lime juice added. . . .

But first of all we want to see the harbor from the Corcovado, the tall mountain we had first seen from the ship, low on the horizon. An open air trolley takes us half way towards the summit. Everywhere, we notice, are very modernistic houses, particularly apartment buildings, gay with bright awnings. Everything is set in a bouquet of trees and luxuriant flowers and vines, which presently usurp the whole of the mountainside as we climb higher, now on a rack-railway.

Coming up out of all this jungle lushness, we see on the summit the colossal new statue of Christo Redemptor, his arms outstretched to form a cross. Looking eastward, towards the harbor.

A sight which takes our breath away. Even after all the descriptions, after all the superlatives which usually dim actuality in a less perfect vista. From this great height we see to our right the tall brown thumb of the Sugar Loaf, leashed to the mainland by threads which are in reality cables, with tiny cars moving towards its summit. This peninsula makes only one of the many crescent-shaped beaches we can see: the whole of Rio de Janeiro lies green and white below us, stretching its fingers into the foam of the surf, dotted with green hills which rise even from among the white buildings. And the smooth blue sea reaches out to the opposite side of the harbor, to the red mountains and islands which enclose the bay.

In the late afternoon we sit in the pavilion, just behind the Christ on this eminence, eating great dishes of fruit salad made of the luscious pink melon called *mamão,* oranges, watermelon and a dozen fruits we cannot name. From here is a view of still another beach and its blue horseshoe lagoon. We have the feeling that always water, mountains and houses are on most intimate terms, with never a rigid division. Green

trees spring up beside the tall modernistic apartment houses which seem to fill all Rio, turning it from the capital that once knew the pomp of a Portuguese emperor to a modern metropolis whose people seem to play at work, and to work only to play more freely. Along the beaches those bright dots of reds and blues and greens are beach umbrellas; even on this weekday there are hundreds of swimmers, who have only to step out of their front doors and cross the great boulevard to the ocean. In the bay below the Sugar Loaf small boats and sculls are clustered around a silver flying clipper. It takes off, leaving a white wake in the green, lazily rising and circling over the city in a last salute. . . .

We descend from the Corcovado through dense tropical foliage: moss and ferns dripping from hundreds of concealed waterfalls, palms and fruit trees separating only to give short glimpses of the blue ocean beyond. At the first station we take another way, and a tram-car hurtles us down steep streets, between houses which must command magnificent views, across a long viaduct, and into Carioca Square. Only a block away is the Avenida Rio Branco.

We pick a table at the very edge of the sidewalk. Inside an orchestra is playing — American jazz. Now people are passing in even greater numbers, many of them stopping for a small cup of the bitter, black Brazilian coffee which must be generously mixed with sugar. The noise of the buses and the talk of people form a pleasant hum.

Upon the Corcovado, we were detached, watching a beautiful pattern; but here we feel a part of the city. And to prove it, we clap our hands loudly in the approved manner for calling a waiter.

"I don't know what to have. . . . What is that frothy drink over there?" It is what seems to be the favorite *refresco,* made from fresh coconut. But the card has dozens of suggestions.

"It's too hot for a gin *tonico* or even beer right now. Let's try one of these ice punches" — which turns out to be of

four different colors with four delicious and exotic flavors.

We have finished the first and — to be frank — have ordered another. We relax at our table. Even though our Portuguese is deplorable, we already feel at home. The whole atmosphere is foreign but far more European than we had expected. Who would think that beyond the mountains lie jungle interiors, that this is the gate to an immense continent? Certainly the people here do not think of it. The women are so smartly clad, yet seldom in sport clothes as American women would be. Pardon us — *North* American women: we must not forget that this continent's inhabitants, as much as we, are *Americanos*. But there is a kind of negligé in the way the women dress. They are — this is a Latin country, after all — primarily and insistently feminine, just as Rio itself is indescribably feminine. At most of the tables here three men usually surround one woman. Except over there: the young girl with the jet-black curls under the big picture hat, hypnotizing the courtly old gentleman. Nearly all the women are beautiful, if we may judge by the ones we see here upon the Rio Branco. . . .

More than once we have walked along this curving Avenida Beiramar on soft, warm evenings. But it is even finer tonight when we are going somewhere, participating. Just the sight of the palms silhouetted against the lamps which line the marble balustrade, close-clustered at a distance; and against the jutting hump of Urca, which is the shore side of the Sugar Loaf, the gay red and blue neon signs, a curious mixture of Brazilian and North American trade-names, sending their unbroken reflections down deep into the water.

It is ten o'clock; everyone is starting out for the evening. From a long way off we see the lighted façade of the casino, cars driving up to its porte-cochere. A few people, we find, have already gathered about the gaming tables, but it is still early for a large crowd. From the next room come the sounds of a jazz orchestra. The dance hall, in keeping with

Rio's trend towards the modernistic, is a semi-circular room with white walls, its murals flanked by rich red curtains and a green-lighted stage for the orchestra; in the corner is another orchestra, all Negroes. As we are looking for the head waiter, someone beckons to us, an American we had met through a letter of introduction from a mutual friend.

We join his table. With him are a Brazilian business associate and his wife. They suggest we have gin and vermouth with them.

"Have you ever danced the *samba?*" the Brazilian asks us. "That is even wilder than this *maxixe.*"

The orchestra was playing a fast number, and the couples on the floor were gyrating and dipping. The Brazilian and his wife began to dance, too. It seemed infinitely complicated, and when they came back we complimented them. They were childishly pleased that we liked it; the dance seemed to gain respect in their eyes simply because foreigners had praised it. We wondered if the Sugar Loaf had been first recognized in all its beauty by a European. . . .

But they were more interested in gambling. The wife of the Brazilian could hardly leave the roulette wheel. By the end of an hour we had lost nearly thirty-four *milreis,* which sounded like a great deal. Fortunately this was only a small extravagance for us, though one we couldn't indulge in often. We had parted with only two American dollars.

Every other table was taken when we went back to ours. The dancing had stopped, and the orchestra, dressed in blue silk overalls and large straw sombreros, was playing a native dance. There were twenty guitars, with a few flutes which kept sliding in and out of the music in an altogether delightful but indescribable manner.

"This is best of all!" we exclaimed enthusiastically. But the music did not belong here, in such a sophisticated setting. It belonged to the country, to the interior. "Do you think we shall hear more of this when we go west?" we asked.

They looked at us in astonishment. As if we had made a social error. Rio, they seemed to say, looks only towards the sea.

Here, at this moment, it was hard for us to believe there was an interior. Even on the quiet night when we had taken a ferry ride across to Nichteroy, on the north side of the bay,

when we had moved away from the noises of the city, we could feel its sophistication, its self-contained air. The thousands of lights were strung up the mountainside until they reached the illuminated statue of Christ. Like a

gigantic Christmas tree. From every aspect Rio shows herself to advantage, like a beautiful woman. You feel that she could never be caught unaware, that she would never come down to breakfast without first looking carefully in the mirror. Sufficient unto herself. . . .

"So you are going into the interior?" he said, and smiled very politely. He wore a monocle and a spotless white suit.

We were talking to the Under-secretary of the Minister of Foreign Affairs, having been ushered through many mahogany doors, across the great reception room with its golden chandelier, its stiff pistachio-colored sofas about the walls, and were now sitting in this cool office. We had just asked him if he had any suggestions as to our future route.

Now we hastened to assure him that we were not exploring, except in the sense that a personal discovery has all the excitement of an expedition. Someone had suggested the Matto Grosso to us, did he. . . .

If the Under-secretary had had any less aplomb, if he had not been a schooled diplomat, accustomed to hearing absurd proposals by presumptive petitioners, his monocle would most certainly have fallen. As it was, he merely smiled, a little more genuinely.

"How very interesting!" he murmured. "You Americans are so original. The Matto Grosso!"

We changed the subject. From an official source, we suggested, we should like to hear something about the hopes for Brazil's future, to learn whether the wealth and modernity of her capital stretched far beyond the surrounding mountains. Evidently this was not quite clear. We repeated, elaborating.

The Under-secretary drew a deep breath. "Yes," he nodded. "Yes, we have many plans. And we are always glad to welcome our friends, the Americans."

The interview was over, so far as we were concerned. . . .

The American business men whom we met were more helpful. On a particularly hot day one of them took us to the Jockey Club, the resplendent white building in the midst of the Rio Branco. The President of the Pan-American Union was to give a speech at luncheon.

In the lounge outside the dining room everyone, chiefly Americans in business, was gathering. The air was fairly buzzing with the news of the State of War, decreed by President Vargas that morning. We asked one of the men about it. He shrugged his shoulders. "There have been communistic disturbances again; this decree is merely a precaution. Now the President is empowered to act as he sees fit."

"Real communism?"

"Well, opposition to the government, at least. From troublemakers. Remember, South America has a tradition for revolutions. You saw the regiment garrison that had been bombarded? Done by a group of young army officers with too liberal leanings."

There was something behind the hints his words gave us, but something not to be merely asked about; rather to be observed for ourselves as we saw more of the country. . . .

Our conversation was interrupted by a news photographer who wanted to take pictures: these men, it was quite apparent, were large factors in Rio's financial circles. When they were free again, we asked them about the Matto Grosso, the great state which lies far to the west and south of Rio.

All the Americans were enthusiastic. They would like to see more of Brazil themselves, but they never had the time. The great coffee and cotton *fazendas,* or plantations, yes. But beyond that, nothing. They would give us letters to men who did know. And in their conversation we heard about another place, back in the mountains. . . .

The theme of the speech at luncheon was good-fellowship and co-operation with other South American countries. The business men applauded loudly. It would have been far

better if we had not been introduced to a dark-faced Brazilian. "I am always so glad to meet an American," he said. "Everything I owe to your United States. Once, I thought God was a Brazilian. Now I know he is a citizen of your country."

There was something of the stool pigeon in his remark. If sincere, it showed a lack of appreciation of his own country. Well, this was only the voice of Rio, which faces east. Not the voice of the interior.

The next day we went back to our best informer: Rio herself. Taking a tram for Alto da Boa Vista ("Height with the Beautiful View") we again traveled steeply up through lush foliage — this time on the side of the city opposite from the Corcovado. At the end of the line we walked away from a fine little palm *plaza,* out along the red clay road, the green vegetation of the mountainside hemming us in. To our right was the Pico da Tijuca, highest of all Rio's sentinels. Here, in the jungle back of Rio it was altogether in keeping that we should meet four black-robed monks, their heads shaven, their feet in sandals. About us was the sound of water from hidden falls, and birds shrilling. A man came up a lower road riding a mule, bells tinkling on the animal's ears.

And then, through a break in the foliage, a view of the ocean again; although we had gone inland from the city we here emerged on another flank of the coast. Stretching from the shore towards us was a valley, covered with terraced fields, the fresh yellow-green of a northern spring. About them, white houses, and above, a beautiful little salmon-tinted church, surrounded by tropical trees so stylized they might have been drawings.

Following a lower road, we came upon the fields, green and glistening with water from the irrigation ditches, and on down the red road into what became a wilderness, a kind of forest reservation called Posto das Furnas. Moss-covered steps led away through caverns, and we wandered till our sense of direction was completely lost. Suddenly we heard a radio, and ahead saw a small restaurant. We made it just

as a tropical thundershower began to pelt down, making the forest roar. The *patrôa* brought us our lunch of beer and sandwiches while we watched the rain. Pouring on the great plant leaves, down the slick darkened trunks of trees, rustling through the ferns, hitting in spray and puddles on the red tile before the door, whistling through the bamboo groves. Before our eyes the greenness became even more fresh, starting up a hundred fragrant odors.

The rain stopped as quickly as it had begun and we continued on down the road which led to the ocean, still a long way off. Finally beyond some fields of sugar cane we came upon a golf course, and the great highway that hugs the shoreline. Following it back to Rio we presently emerged upon a hill. All about us lay the ocean, and to our left the Sugar Loaf and the houses clustered near it. A grand view, over a city worth coming five thousand miles to see. No denying her romance, no arguing her charm, but after all, a modern city. Now we were going to turn our backs on her. Towards the land, and not to see an ocean again until they called it the Pacific, far across the continent. Which we would cross, somehow, by an undetermined trail. . . .

ITATIAYA

THE SHEPHERDS' COUNTRY

This is Homen de Mello. An ox-cart toils up through the red quagmire towards the railway station where we are standing, the driver resigned to the soft drizzle — the end of the storms which have swollen the rivers till they flow red through the tropical green foliage. This is the color scheme of all Brazil: red earth, green vegetation — often repeated more intimately in the red tiles of the houses against the drooping green banana leaves.

We slosh down the muddy country road which serves as Main Street, and at the one hotel hire horses for the ride up to Repouso Itatiaya, Donati's place, hidden somewhere at the base of Brazil's highest mountain. Three rat-tailed, mud-covered animals are brought out by the German proprietor, and together with a companion we are off towards the cloud-hidden range of peaks. Behind us, skidding as he trots to keep up, comes the long-legged colt of one of our mares. It whinnies and we all laugh. We are glad to be out in the open

again, that is it. Our companion, a Czechoslovakian, is joining his wife and child for a short vacation, escaping Rio's heat. When we first met him, coming out of the hotel in khaki shorts, his pipe, his hat turned down, his full raincoat, we supposed him an Englishman; he addressed us in German, and now we are talking in a mixture of Spanish and Portuguese.

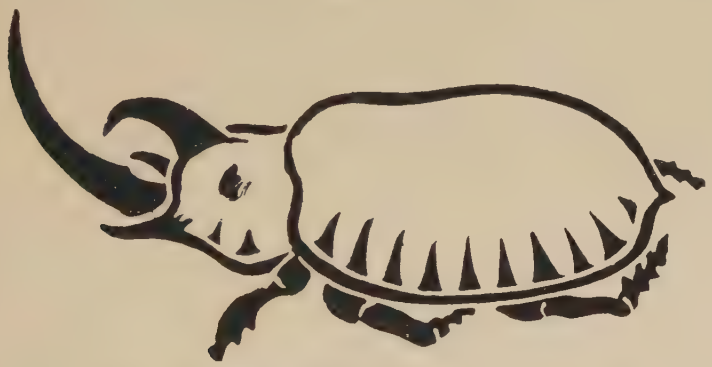
"You will like Donati, you will like his place," he assures us. "It is very wild there, and you can take many trips out to the waterfalls, or up to Itatiaya — I have stayed there many times."

But there is no doubt we shall enjoy it. The trail is harder now, beginning to climb the long narrow valley that digs back into the foothills, and a mountain stream, contradicting the Brazilian colors with its milky water, tumbles and thunders down over the boulders beside the road. Once it foams under us as we cross it on a wooden bridge. Everywhere about, a purple-flowering tree, the *quaresma* — "You have come just in time for its blooming," the Czech says. Then up among the fir trees he points out the experimental station for the Botanical Garden of Rio. "You must meet Luís and see his beautiful collection of butterflies and orchids."

Still we are going up into the mountains, higher and higher in this little side valley, till it seems we can go no farther unless we tunnel through the forest-covered slope which shuts off the valley's end, or rise straight up through the grey clouds which blot out the summit. Then a first glimpse of a blue-trimmed chalet above the Japanese firs — Donati's place — and we are dismounting. Donati himself comes out to meet us, sensibly wearing high-laced boots, amusingly wearing a sun helmet in the drizzle — a pet habit of his, we find.

"This is fine," he beams, "please have coffee, please come in" — it is as though we had known him always. Scraping the mud off our shoes we go inside. Donati is talking rapidly,

enthusiastically, in German with the Czech. Then in Portuguese to the cook as we pass the kitchen, and back again to English as he shows us the living-dining room. Brown rafters, a painted frieze, rush-bottomed chairs, gas lamps, and dozens of oil paintings, done by friends who have stayed here with him. Best of all, the excellent view from the great windows fronting the valley. The clouds cover the valley floor, dull blue-grey below, but somewhere from behind us the late sun is trying to break through and tinges the upper stratum with pale orange light.



"It is a good augury," says Donati. "You have brought fine weather. Tomorrow we will bring up your bags on a mule, no? Now we must have coffee and then I will show you to your room. You can sleep here in the main house, but I think you will like better the little cabins down below the orchard."

Then we are introduced to the coffee and the bread, with the delicious jam made from the *aracá* fruit, which in that combination come to mean tea time at Donati's. . . .

Tonight we are all sitting in the living room under the bright gaslight. Bowman is reading in a rocking chair, squeaking back and forth in a Maine-coast-porch-manner. Donati, who is seldom still, is busy fixing a dozen little things, stopping now and then to talk and laugh with Flavio, the

Brazilian with French parentage who draws amusing cartoons of the life here at Repouso Itatiaya. Dickinson plays bridge with a German couple and the Czech, who is an expert. An international game, the bidding a crazy mixture of Spanish, German, French, Portuguese and English. Once the game stops for a moment when Flavio's little four year old boy solemnly passes around the room, kissing each of these veteran guests good-night, shyly offering us his hand.

Later, we talk with Donati, and for the first time hear about the shepherd country.

"I have never been there myself," he says, "and I am sure no foreigner has ever visited these people. It would be fine if you could be the first — I shall go myself this summer. I know it's marvelous — I want you to go!"

Donati's enthusiasm, enhancing every subject that he touches on, is catching. But he wants us especially to make the trip back into the mountains behind Itatiaya, and brings out his collection of fine coverlets which have come from this unknown country in the Serra Negra, the Black Mountain. When we are ready, he will send for a *cabôclo,* a half-breed native guide — he knows the very man, Alfredo: everything will be fine!

"*Ay, Teresa*" — Donati's favorite expression — greets us each time he finds we haven't seen some part of the surrounding country. So it may mean that we will hike back to the Botanical Station and meet Luís, who knows all the region and its flowers and shows that he is more than botanist by doing water colors of the high mountain country which lies above the Repouso.

Or it may suggest starting in the opposite direction towards a waterfall, winding our way up through the dense tropic forest with damp, rotting leaves under foot, the trail hacked through the jungle which grows so fast that it will hide the path in six months' time unless it is recut. Here in the darker places, where the sunlight never penetrates, you can see monkeys and you cannot miss the brilliant-plumaged

birds, even the parrots, whose green coloring is so like the forest. The waterfall itself is almost choked by the luxuriance, dropping through a tiny clearing which threatens to be swallowed up by the great leaves which press out over the rushing water. A splendid, wild country, suggesting other places in Brazil — a country that lets men conquer only a little of it and no more. A country made more vivid for us by Donati's stories.

Of the Tupi Indians, for example, who are a tribe of the Guaraní: "You will hear more of them when you get to the Matto Grosso," he says to us. "They have been slowly pushed back to the west, but you see their influence in all the words of this region. Words, like *itaóca,* from the Guaraní, which means 'house built on a rock.'"

Donati has named his own house Itaóca — where we will have breakfast one of these mornings.

Some one of these mornings we will be going up and past the great mountain, to the shepherd country, leaving this easy life with its European feeling, leaving the rushing stream which forms a swimming pool beside our cabin, the stone jars of Portuguese wine, the polyglot collection of old books and magazines, the talk of oils and etchings that Donati has picked up. There is a warm delight in having found this place — enjoying the enthusiasm that Donati evokes in us and in the friends who come back year after year to stay with him. . . .

Breakfast with Donati and Flavio at Itaóca the last morning. This is a neat little house off in a clearing a half-mile from the main chalet — a house filled with a million souvenirs of places and people, some of them, like the victrola, memories of days when Donati ran a music shop in Rio. Most of all we admire a great sideboard of dull brown wood, beautifully carved.

"Ah, there," Donati exclaims, and we can see this is a favorite enthusiasm. "There you can see the finest wood in all Brazil — *jacarandá.* You know," laughing, "I only paid

four hundred *milreis* for it — twenty-four dollars — and antique too. The Russian Jews buy it from the old families in the back country. They go into a house and say: 'Why, you poor fellow, look at all that nasty old furniture you have here! You're out of date. Now in the cities they have fine, modern things. As a special favor I'll exchange with you — for only fifty *milreis!*' And so the Jew gives them pitch pine or fumed oak pieces, and gets all the rare old furniture."

Alfredo, our *cabôclo* guide, was preceding us up the trail on his bare feet; we jogged along on our small mules, twisting sidewise in our saddles to peer out and downward through the lush tangle to catch glimpses of the sun-filled valley far below. Looking down upon a thicket all of green, with tall palms waving over the dwarfed banana trees, and the mountainsides splashed with the silver-leafed *furbaúba.* Altogether, we were in high spirits. Particularly because we knew we were going to like Alfredo.

Certainly his appearance hardly lived up to Donati's insistence that he was the most resourceful man of the region. Around his chin and disappearing under his hat was a white napkin, giving him the appearance of a child with the mumps, though he was a short old fellow with a wizened mustache and curly hair. He seemed to have no chin at all, and his back-country Portuguese came bumbling unintelligibly out of his mouth. No one had ever seen him without the band-

age, and the story had gone the rounds that his chin had been shot off in a fight. Even with his long sheathed knife he could hardly be imagined as ferocious. By the time he stopped at his house to get his little nephew, Eduardo, we were sure we liked him.

At the bridge where the river plunged down through a steep trough of grey boulders, Alfredo led us back into the woods, up slippery ladders and through mossy glades to a beautiful waterfall, the Cascata de Maromba, which floated like a veil down a series of steps, then changed its mind and danced off at right angles.

From the bridge we began to climb, switching back and forth on the trail while Alfredo and the little boy waved us ahead and disappeared straight up the side, making a short cut; we would come around a corner presently and find them sitting by the trail. At this height the valley below us began to unfold, and we saw beyond the Botanical Station on its green hump, far off to Homen de Mello in the valley. All about us were giant trees, each one with some kind of parasite; trees stretching leanly to the sun, holding all their leaves in a flat bouquet at the very top. Often they and the big-leafed plants blocked out the middle distance, framing the picture, leaving only that potent contrast between the dark sharpness of the foreground and the hazy, bluish quality of distant landscape. And over the trail, the long curving fishpoles of green bamboo. Still with us, too, the purple *quaresma,* and the yellow-flowering wild acacia. And to quench our thirst Alfredo picked us the little bright-red Brazilian raspberry, half strawberry in taste.

By lunchtime we had climbed as far as Macieiras, the apple orchard. Once Donati told us the story which this deserted place, with its trees slowly dying, choked by heavy fungi, had witnessed. Originally all the land of this region, a district limited by widespread towns, had belonged to the famous old Viscount Mauá, who had built Brazil's first railway, organized the first Amazon navigation company, and

had eventually run the usual course of venturesome public utility men by losing his last cent. The government had bought the land for colonization purposes and had planted European pear and apple trees — sight unseen, ground untested. It had been a miserable failure; our shepherds were a few of the surviving settlers.

Above Macieiras we came out into full sunlight and open, rocky country. The trail degenerated here, made worse by

the recent rain, until at last we had to dismount and lead our mules through a steep trough of rock barely wide enough for each hoof. Just short of the top we stopped and looked back at the amazing panorama which had opened out below us. Curiously, the mountains on the other side of Homen de Mello seemed even higher now. Range after green range receded towards the east. But here were no more trees, only a grey-green tundra grass, growing in tufts among the boulders. And as we came over the top, we saw a wild upland

country. From the plateau, the mountains shot up: we were by no means at the very summit. Suddenly Alfredo stopped and pointed: through the long grass was running a queer-looking bird with a long neck. "*Siriema,*" explained Eduardo. The smallest member of the ostrich family.

Ahead of us now on a bare hillock we saw the meteorological station where we were to spend the night. While Alfredo and the boy put the mules in a corral, we climbed up to it. Somehow, that pale-blue wooden house, its planes picked out sharply by the sunlight, its white wind- and rain-instruments enclosed by a neat little fence, the cattle and lean horses licking salt from a stone basin nearby, was a fitting kind of habitation for this wild spot.

A woman opened the door. She and her sister, we soon found, were stationed here. We went out with them while they milked the cows, holding our glasses and receiving the warm, foamy drink — straight from producer to consumer. The women had been here six years, they said, and although they did not mind, and were proud of their Itatiaya, this was the only station in Brazil not on a road. Soon, they hoped, they would be transferred.

Alfredo was too shy to join us at dinner, so we ate our rice and chicken alone. Even up here, there was the inevitable dessert of the Brazilian interior — white cheese and *marmelada,* a kind of candied slab with a dozen names but only one flavor.

It was dark when we went outside, a heavy dew soaked our feet, the full moon was hidden by scudding, ominous clouds. Earlier we had seen the mountains above the valleys ahead, where we would go tomorrow, dyed a deep blue against the gold sunset. Now, lightning flashes began to come. With every moment of brightness, tall peaks stood out. The wind was blowing, drowning out the pulsating sound of the stream, driving the dark clouds in our direction, their masses spreading fan-like as they rushed towards us. It began to rain, first in scattered drops, then insistently with

ever greater force. We ran back into the house and the woman brought a candle which flickered in the gusts of wind seeping through the room. Then more milk, hot this time — great bowlfuls of it till we could hold no more and staggered off to bed, the storm noises in our ears, lightning still flaring out above the range. A night worthy of Macbeth. . . .

The cold early morning found us looking into the Homen de Mello valley, which seemed an ice-choked lake, only a few distant mountain tops rising above the low clouds. But the mountains we were to approach, on the other side, stood out clear and promising after the rain. Alfredo, late in coming, brought new animals: his own mules had wandered off during the night.

We were all mounted this morning as we rode out across the rocky way. Beside us now loomed the Agulhas Negras, the Black Needles, whose tops are the apex of all Brazil, some nine thousand feet high. Today it was slow going, and very soon hot. The huge grey boulders had no scale; only when we were beside them did we realize how dwarfed we were. Apparently there was no trail through the scrub, yet Alfredo always found a way. When at last we came to the end of the high country he told us to lead our horses; so, slipping over loose stone, tearing our clothes on the thorns and cactus, we half-skidded, half-crawled down a steep cliff, never sure whether our animals might come sliding down on top of us. Although that was only the first of a dozen such maneuvers, we immediately had a new respect for these shaggy mountain horses and Alfredo's little mouse-grey burro. At each test they showed themselves more sure-footed than Alfredo, and more nimble than the little boy.

By lunchtime, when we found a stream and tore apart the chicken the women had cooked for us, we seemed to have come a discouragingly short way. But once more on our trail we soon saw the valley of the Serra Negra, which was not black at all but green, with the river Ayruóca, a name as musical as its sound, streaming across its floor. How

simply and with what neatness the mountain forms ran into one another, the angle where one ridge met the next so clear and smoothly chiseled. A pattern to it all, starting with the great mountain forms themselves, then the single elements — fields, rocks and trees, which decorated the surface. Unity of form and pattern and color — varied by the element of atmosphere which added a bluish haze to each receding range. A

long way to go still, for we must wind around the mountainsides, generally keeping above the green, among the scrubby higher mountain vegetation. But now and then we plunged down into almost inky darkness in the forest, a darkness made more striking by the flecks and shafts of sunlight which tried to fathom it. A sort of other-worldly feeling, with the constant drip of water, the strange pointed leaves of orchids sitting like birds' nests in the trees. Or coming around a bend, when the burros sank deep into the mud, then slid down over rocks into a little brook, its water making a happy music running downward through the jungle. Strange mosses, and great leaves above our heads, fallen logs and trees whose lichen-covered branches formed weird twisting patterns against the green around them. An other-worldly feeling that by contrast was stronger when we came up from the depths and climbed a slope into the open sunshine. A sudden change, and yet a change which quite explained itself — the flecks of light we found below became united, now clarifying shapes rather than destroying them, singling out objects which before were mere elements of pattern in the darkness. Because the trail was always steep our cinches must be tight-

ened again every few kilometers, and once, going up a particularly steep incline, Bowman slid off the back of his horse, saddle and all. After that he carefully obeyed Alfredo's instructions and held on to the horse's mane.

It was late in the afternoon when Alfredo suddenly put up his hand, and we stopped, listening. From somewhere up the trail came two long, mournful notes. *Os pastóres* — the shepherds. And presently we came upon them.

No one had prepared us for their appearance. Perhaps we had vaguely expected some sort of dark-faced Indian, such as you meet in the Guerrero mountains of Mexico. Nothing could have been further from the actuality. As they came riding up, and stopped, their tall, lean forms bent over their saddles, their pale faces shadowed by black sombreros, their muzzle-loading rifles across the pommels, we realized what they were: the counterparts of Kentucky hillbillies, even to the manner of their drawling speech. Except that the language was Portuguese, and Kentucky would have been a funnier name to them than Ayruóca.

They said they were going after some strayed cattle. Alfredo explained that we were *gringos,* come to find a *cubierto* or two that they made. The men shook their heads. This was Holy Week, there was no weaving being done, and those that were made were being saved to sell at the Easter fair. At any rate, we could stay at a shepherd's *casa.* That was ahead a league or so. And blowing their horns, wishing us "*Outro día*— another day," they rode on.

We saw the house long before we reached it — of tan adobe, with a corral in front, sheep grazing among the Paraná pines with their curious topknots of needles, behind it a peak, planted with maize nearly to the top. A quiet-spoken woman came to the door and asked us into a small room, partitioned only to the level of our eyes, open to the rafters above. We sat down on a sheep's hide, admiring the heavy wool saddle cloths in soft blues and browns. The woman brought us coffee just as the shepherd appeared, a bagful of

pigeons slung over his shoulder. Despite his long-rifle, his black hat and beard, which gave him rather a sinister appearance, he was shy as the little yellow-haired child who ran to him and hung on his hand. With Alfredo he spoke a few words, but there were long intervals when he stared out of the doorway: probably silent not because he could find no words but because there was no need to speak. Doubtless the sudden appearance of outsiders had changed his familiar valley for him; the adjustment was slow.

By the light of a smoky lamp, that night, we ate the simple meal these people offered us — rice, potatoes, beans, and for dessert, curds and whey. The shepherd leaned his broad yet frail shoulders against the door and watched us, still not quite at ease; but we, who were adjusting our own perspective as much as he, were already content. In that half-dark room we felt hunger being appeased, relaxation after a long ride: fundamental sensations our host had always known.

They gave us the bed in a little room filled with dusty-smelling potatoes and a giant squash, three feet in diameter, that would have won a prize at any county fair at home. The corn-husk mattress wheezed and sighed as we turned over. And the sheep-ticks found unexplored fields to conquer.

Even if the next day had been memorable for nothing else, we would remember it for our drinking of sixteen cups of coffee, spaced at intervals on our walk up and down the valley of the Ayruóca. Primarily, of course, it was a search for *cubiertos.*

Three chickens, partaking of a potato diet underneath the bed, cackle and scramble out of the room as we get up early in the morning. Outside, Alfredo is sitting in the hot sunlight, talking to the shepherd and the old grandfather who made his appearance last night before supper. With obvious reluctance Alfredo cuts short his role of news-bringer and man of the outside world, and we take the trail up the mountainside, above the green valley. At the top of the ridge we come upon a house. By the door there are a calf and a few chickens, and a lean old man salutes us, gravely shaking hands. It is difficult to understand his and Alfredo's dialect, and when he ushers us into the one room the house affords, we imagine he must have a *cubierto* or two to show us.

From a corner he brings forth two seats, x-shaped like Roman chairs, and takes his place on the raised platform which serves for an oven. His wife is not included in the conversation, but ordered to prepare coffee. The conversation becomes purely social, there is no mention of coverlets. We are from the *Estados Unidos?* That is a long distance? People are rich there? It is a large country? Yes, well, we must have coffee.

Brazilian coffee everywhere is good, but in the cities you dilute its strength and bitterness with half a cup of sugar; naturally these people cannot afford such a luxury. Alfredo finishes his news-purveying and the man takes us up the ridge to point out another house which might have *cubiertos.* He has come here only recently, he explains, and points out the charred trunks of trees in the field he is clearing. Potatoes there, a few vegetables, but especially maize and rice. At the hilltop we shake hands once again and go down towards the other house, led by a little shepherd boy who has come along. A more prosperous establishment, this, with a large family: among the whites, one very black Negress and her curly-haired child. The man of the house is like all these shepherds, the same scraggly black beard, timid eyes, bare feet. But at first we are not the center of his attention: he

has caught sight of the shining twenty-two revolver little Eduardo is proudly carrying in his belt. He fondles it lovingly: one cannot help feeling how much more of a child he is than Eduardo, who already at eleven knows the trails, handles himself and talks like a man. But Eduardo is dark, at least half Indian.

Very soon it is apparent that this man, too, has no *cubiertos*. But it is only an hour till lunchtime and he is still looking wistfully at the revolver. Will it really shoot? He must try it. A target is made upon the corn-crib, the grubby little children are hauled out of range. We must all try: there is something about a revolver that is so satisfying. And Eduardo looks on, half proud of his ownership, half despairing over the loss of precious bullets.

When we go inside for lunch we find a sewing machine. Someone has trekked out from our hidden valley and brought back this and other symbols of civilization. The shepherd proudly displays a cheap lighter, with which he lights his corn-husk cigarettes. Yet he has never worn a pair of shoes. It is hard to describe the feeling that the combination of these incongruities gives to us. If these people were dark-faced Indians, it would be quite another thing. . . .

As we are finishing our meal a man comes up with two great baskets on his little burro: inside are full-grown sheep which bleat resentfully. This would make a good snapshot. We take out our kodak. . . .

Eduardo's revolver immediately loses caste. The man has never seen a camera before. He looks into the lens to see the picture. Is it? — would it be? He is embarrassed, but his eyes shine like a child's. We help him over the rough spot. Of course we will take his picture.

The whole scene is immediately transformed. A moment before the entire extensive family had been lazily concerned with small jobs. Now there is an uproar. From inside the house come the giggles of the oldest girl, who has shyly hung at the door. Water is brought to wash all the children's faces.

And in ten minutes we have an array before the door: everyone in Sunday best, our host even with hat and coat — but no shoes. They are having their pictures taken, and for nothing!

A new kind of assurance seems to have been instilled in the shepherd now. He begins to bargain with Eduardo for the revolver. To keep us a little longer he sets up his handloom and minutely describes how he works the shuttle, how

the threads come down — so. And as we finally leave he magnanimously refuses to accept a cent for lunch. After Holy Week and the selling at the fair, he vows, he will buy Eduardo's gun for eighty *milreis* — nearly five American dollars, a small fortune.

From here on we do not linger at any one house — except to have just a cup of coffee — or two. Up and down the valley, crossing the rushing stream, asking people. Finally there comes a definite clue: the red house has them. *Seguramente* — surely.

It lies below us in a sequestered part of the valley, surrounded by fertile fields. Tangerine trees hang over the deep pool beside the house, and a primitive kind of water wheel lifts and falls with a cool sound. A tight-lipped woman asks us to come in when we arrive at her door. Of course we will have some coffee? We accept, and mention that we understand she has some *cubiertos*. Yes: and that is all we hear until after we have had coffee and roasted pine

nuts which she brings in steaming. Softly Alfredo insinuates we have come a long way, are willing to pay a good price. The *senhora* is only mildly interested, we have to persuade her to open a great chest and produce the coverlets.

The wool is soft and pliant, there is an appealing feel to them. Out of half a dozen which she produces we pick out one of soft blue and burnt orange plaid, and another of a smaller pattern in magenta, white and navy blue. The white is of cotton, the other two colors of wool. Together the blankets cost no more than five dollars.

We are a strange sight as we start back to our shepherd's. The two of us sucking tangerines, with our blankets across our shoulders; Alfredo with his white chin bandage; little Eduardo with a live chicken under his arm — food for tomorrow's ride. Now we must traverse the whole valley, walking along the rich fields, past little shrines along the trail. It is hardly a trail now, but a deep trough, so narrow we must put one tired foot directly in front of the other. The sun has long since gone down, a single cloud holds its last orange rays in the still-blue sky. Now the light fades and the mountains darken from green to black. The moon, well up, begins to cast its shadow before us. We climb steeply, passing between tall cornstalks, a light breeze rustling the leaves. The moonlight becomes more brilliant, cooler, and the shadows stronger. Now it is completely night, and as we dip through a dark wooded spot we trip over a rough place in the trail. On coming out into a cleared field we find our feet are soaked with dew. Tomorrow we shall appreciate the luxury of having mules to ride. . . .

Supper is cold when we finally come into our shepherd's kitchen. With the universal gesture of the tired housewife, the woman brushes the hair from her face with the back of her hand, and puts more wood on the fire. Smoke begins to fill the low room, making our eyes smart. But we sink down on the bare floor. A young woman with a very old face

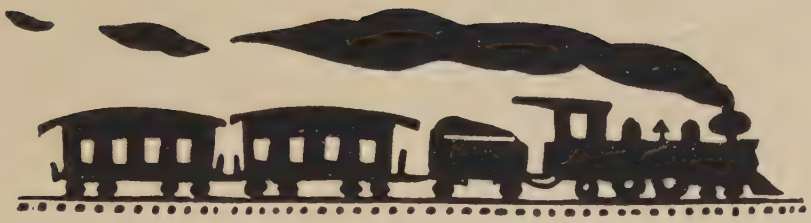
is nursing her baby, and the little yellow-haired daughter, watching us with big eyes, keeps pulling corn from its red cob. The shepherd, squatting on his haunches, listens to our guide's account of the day. The price we paid for the *cubiertos* is quite fair, they decide. Only the mother demurs, pointing to her small hand-loom in the corner. Those people have shuttles to weave with; she must do her saddle blankets entirely by hand, and gets less for them.

We have had our supper, rice and beans with the farina — ground corn — over them. The women have heated large tubs of water and now the men are carefully washing their

feet, sitting around a pile of coals heaped in the middle of the floor. The grandfather nods by the fire. We are glad for the warmth, for it is chill tonight.

These are fine people, we cannot help thinking. They have taught us something, a number of things. Their lives have a peculiarly satisfying quality: we say this even as the smoke stings our eyes, as we look at this pretty child, so dirty and ragged. An isolated valley people. One of the few peoples in all Brazil, they have told us, who practice a craft, who make a beautiful thing for their own use. And yet they are white: that is the startling fact. They or their fathers were immigrants. Are they pioneers, blazing a way, or a lost people — lost from pride and civilization? Somewhere in the back of our minds there comes an intimation. The

future of Brazil: a different-sounding phrase when spoken here from the one we heard in the marble Jockey Club in Rio. But as yet only an intimation. All we know is that we have found part of the answer, here in the intimate green valley of the Serra Negra.



WEST TO THE FRONTIER

Train ride through the tropics. West a thousand miles across a great country to the state of Matto Grosso. Through the hot red land which nourishes the banana and palm along the humid coastal plain, stretches out beneath the miles of coffee bushes and cotton plants, and pushes on into the cattle country beyond the River Paraná. To the frontier.

One day's ride to São Paulo, the Chicago of Brazil, which feeds the port of Santos with coffee, cotton, oranges, and the dried beef they call *xarque;* a city fed by the rich lands to the west. Another day to Baurú, surrounded by its great coffee *fazendas.* And finally a night, a day and a night. Creeping through the hot level plains, cutting a red slit through the green brush. . . .

São Paulo. They tell us proudly that the city has doubled its size in fourteen years, that hardly a town beyond to the west is much older than that. Of anything west of the border of their own São Paulo State they know little except that three times a week a train goes to the frontier. They

are proud of their beer, bearing names like Hanseatica, Hamburgueza, Brahma Chopp: after a few hours here you do not need to be told that São Paulo is one of the largest German-speaking cities in the world. But it is a Scotchman who gives us a letter to the manager of one of his cattle *fazendas,* or ranches, in the Matto Grosso.

In the hotels, German waiters and bellboys. On the trains we have seen two Englishmen, looking too colonial in their white suits and sun helmets. Also two French officers, going out to instruct Brazilian troops. In the new towns the Syrians own all the stores and Americans direct the extensive *frigorificos,* or cold-storage meat plants. Any man's country, and who is a true Brazilian?

At least, one would think, coffee is a real Brazilian citizen. But we find it is only a naturalized one: coffee itself immigrated to Brazil just two hundred years ago! First it was planted along the coast. Now it is pushing back, pushing back, leaving the exhausted earth behind. They are burning coffee to keep up the price and planting instead the *oro branco* — " white gold " — their pet name for cotton.

With each kilometer beyond São Paulo we are passing into a more recent chapter in Brazil's history. Exploitation: that is nearly all the history she has. Back in Rio, they admitted, no one cares to preserve old landmarks.

A trip into the future, and yet going back to more primitive methods. To an era like our own Wild West. Already we see men wearing the wide sombrero, the heavy boot, and the inevitable six-shooter.

Near Baurú, our second stop, we visit one of the great coffee *fazendas.* Only twenty years old in its consolidated form. So largely in the future: the bushes they have planted are good for another score of years at least. The *fazenda* is practically a law unto itself, governing and administering to its eighty colonies, whose people pick the coffee, bring it in to be washed, hulled and dried in the hot sun. In the carpentry shops they make their own furniture from the cedar and

rose *peroba* wood. Even their selecting machinery is home-made. And this is only one of hundreds of *fazendas,* all with much the same independent life. . . .

Train again, late at night, this time for Campo Grande, as near as the railroad comes to our cattle ranch. Narrow gauge, wooden cars. There is a story they tell about a visitor who, having observed both first and second class coaches, failed to see why he should pay the difference in price. He did not even mind the crowding, he insisted. Still he was advised to go first. Only later did he find out why: near a forest the train stopped and the engineer commanded all second class passengers to go out and cut firewood for the boiler!

We have a wooden bunk in our first class, an accommodation which seems better the first night than the following day: the bunks do not fold into seats, we must sit on the edge all the hot day long, our feet in the aisle. Most of the men, grizzled ranchers with stories about their lands and the old times, defeat this inconvenience by lolling about all day in their pyjamas. Waiting for night to come again.

A red slit through the green tangle. Stations mere clearings in the brush. Occasional glimpses of an endless plain. Heat and cinders. It takes no imagination to know we are on our way to the frontier.

Then, early on the second morning, the train unceremoniously crosses the swirling brown waters of the Rio Paraná. The spine of Brazil: its upper reaches nearly connect with tributaries to the Amazon, its mouth is far below at Buenos Aires. And west of it, the *roça,* the hinterland, the back-country.

Campo Grande, nearing the end of this weary trail. Its wide red streets, its soldiers in their green uniforms, its cowmen riding along on horseback: altogether, its air of the frontier. Not far away lie both Bolivia and Paraguay. . . . Arriving the day before Easter, which in temperature here resembles more a hot Fourth of July. And otherwise, only

another Sunday. Already we have seen that the church seldom dominates the town in this region. Some will tell you it is because the Portuguese are not as religious as the Spaniards. That they are interested only in money. The probable reasons are more simple: this country was not settled in the great colonial days of church-building, and later it was not a purely Catholic people that came.

You can still hear the familiar wild west tales from even the younger ranchers — of cabarets and champagne, of "dames" and wholesale shootings. Good times — just back in the 'twenties, when the *milreis* was worth something in world exchange, seven to a gold dollar, and cattle brought a decent price. Now it is a different story.

But there is life still on the *fazendas;* we are going to see it soon. For now, after two days and many inquiries, we are in the mail truck, starting the twenty leagues to Capão Bonito where Don Carlos, the *fazendeiro,* lives. Even the driver wears the costume which has become increasingly popular as we have moved westward: the very full trousers they call *bombachas,* rather resembling plus fours in their bagginess, except that they are embroidered down the sides and stuffed into riding boots which approach perfection the more wrinkles they have at the ankles; a great neckerchief, often black; and the revolver. Perhaps his only use for it is demonstrated when he stops to take pot-shot at a *carancho,* a beautiful brown hawk. But you must never criticize any article of this garb before a cowman. It is regulation, and he is proud of it.

Every means of transportation has a motion all its own, but this mail truck, an old Ford station wagon, outdoes the roll of our freighter, the bounce of the mules, and the jolting of the last train. The rains have turned the red clay into a mire that sends the car sliding and tossing about like a cork on a wave. Now we begin to meet covered wagons, drawn by six plodding oxen: in this kind of weather, our driver says, it will take them a week to do the sixty-five miles! Some of

them have already stopped for the night, the men squatting around a campfire, the oxen lost on the immensity of the plain.

For we are passing through open country now, the red land only occasionally dotted with green copses which define a winding river or a swamp. And we begin to see the cattle they have told us about in São Paulo: zebus, they call them, curious beasts with humps, originally imported from India because they withstood the hot weather and the parasitic *berne* fly — which we had already encountered ourselves at Itatiaya.

Just at sunset we stop for supper at a tiny farmhouse, almost lost in the expanse of rolling country, a single accent defying the sweep of land and sky. The light has shifted to a strange yellow-green, warming the copses with the rich sauce of an old Dutch landscape in the manner of Cuyp.

Darkness comes quickly, and all we know is that we are bowling along the road, the driver and his two companions in front singing over and over again the same song; even in Brazil a car and a cool clear night bring the same universal desire to sing. We have long ago passed the northern boundary of the *fazenda*. Then a yellow speck ahead grows into the light of a lantern, and we have arrived at Capão Bonito — the Beautiful Copse.

MATTO GROSSO

THE CATTLE FAZENDA

The man who was holding the lantern came out to us. Behind him we could just make out a long, low building beside a great white gate. "We have a letter to Don Carlos —" we began. Suddenly we felt embarrassed, thrusting ourselves upon the hospitality of someone we had never even seen.

"Do I hear English?" we heard a deep voice saying, and out of the shadows appeared a stocky little man, built like a good quarter-back. He was wearing pyjamas. "I'm Carlos," he said, and began shaking our hands vigorously. By the light of the lantern we could see his sharp grey eyes. The other man was younger, and in riding breeches, although he wore slippers instead of boots. Don Carlos introduced him as Don Georges, the storekeeper. Together they shouldered our bags. Our letter had been barely glanced at; we were visitors and were therefore welcome.

As we went through the gate and up to the house we could dimly see the fine trees which surrounded it. There was a faint odor of limes on the air, and from nearby came the

sound of a stream. In the darkness we could see only outlines and suggestions, but the house was one-storeyed, encompassed by a wide veranda. The *senhora* had hardly shaken hands with us before she was calling to someone to bring clean sheets for our beds. Don Carlos led us through a curtained doorway into our spacious room, then casually stepped through the French window on the other side to the veranda again.

"This is a kind of open-air house," he laughed — he had a delightful way of chuckling in his deep voice. "Come out where it is cooler."

We followed him around to the front of the veranda, which looked out upon a garden. The candle he was carrying threatened to go out in the soft breeze, and he lighted a lantern. From the porch rafters, between the slender wood columns, hung baskets full of vines and curious kinds of orchids. There was a feeling of spaciousness in this low-roofed ranch house with all its open porch; a sense of the luxuriousness of this copse, which marched right up to the veranda.

Don Carlos had insisted we sit in the hammocks — "might as well get used to ranch furniture right away" — and had been questioning us about the outside world.

"I'm glad you've come," he said, "because I don't often have a chance to speak English. I talk French with Don Georges, Spanish with my wife, Portuguese with all my children and the Bookkeeper, and Guaraní with my Indian cowboys." He was nursing one knee between his hands, swaying back and forth as he talked. "We are very much away from things, out here. I should be very bored if I did not have so much work to do. . . . Georges, come sit down with us." He laughed, for without thinking he had spoken in French. "*Comprends-tu,* Sarita?" he asked his little daughter who had come forward shyly to hand him a decorated gourd. He held it up for us to see; out of it was sticking a long silver

tube. "I thought you might like to try some maté," he said. "You've probably heard of yerba maté? That's the Spanish name. This is the way we drink it here." He began sucking through the silver tube, then handed it back to Sarita, who poured more hot water from a kettle into the gourd. "To *Senhor* Dickinson next," he ordered. "That's called the *chimarrão,* when we pass it around clockwise. Like a peace pipe. . . . What do you think of it?"

"A little bitter at first, but good." We had found the gourd filled almost to the top with the bright green herb, crushed and fragrant.

"We all drink it, but to the Indians it is necessary," Don Georges put in. "You see, they eat mostly meat and this is a safeguard against kidney trouble. A substitute for vegetable vitamins."

He had been speaking in Portuguese, and Don Carlos chided him. "English, now, Georges! How can we ever learn if we do not speak it?"

"Neither of you seems to need any lessons."

"I am terrible," Don Georges laughed, "but he is very good. After school in Paris I lived in England for six months, but Don Carlos learned right here in this *fazenda.* He has no foreign accent at all, has he?"

"Not the slightest." He did speak perfectly; we were not trying to flatter him.

Don Carlos chuckled. "It is because I have no nationality. My last name is Dutch, I have a Dutch passport, but I cannot speak a word of the language. When I was a boy I lived with my mother in Geneva and spoke French."

As we talked, the *cuia,* as they called the maté gourd, had gone twice around. We offered Don Carlos a cigarette, but he shook his head. "Gave up smoking when I found I couldn't memorize fifty English words a day. You see, I came here to work a good many years ago. There was an American *fazendeiro* here then. In São Paulo did they tell

you the joke about me? I used to make out a daily log. One day I wrote, 'Light shower but no rain.' I meant lightning, of course." He chuckled to himself.

The night was perfect, and as we lay back in the hammock we could see the stars shining in all their millions above the trees. The palms rustled dryly in the soft breeze. Don Georges had taken the lantern and gone inside to put a record on the victrola. It was Tito Schipa singing. Don Carlos called:

"Give them a polka, they should hear that. The *Tres de Maio.*"

And for the first time we heard a Paraguayan polka, one of the songs which Don Carlos said his Guaraní Indian cowboys, who came up from Paraguay, liked to sing. The chorus, too, was sung in Guaraní. Both men laughed at it, but said they liked the cowboys. "Better than ten Brazilians for this ranch work," they assured us.

"Is there a separate ranch house near here?" we asked.

"There are a number of houses, one at each different corral. We all go from one *retiro* to another, you see," Don Carlos explained. "They never come here except when we have to brand the cattle at the corral over beyond the store. We don't have many cattle right now, but—"

"How many head have you?"

"Only eighteen thousand. When there is plenty of water we can graze a good many thousands more—and we have. It takes a lot of cattle to fill forty square leagues of land."

Forty square leagues. That was, roughly, five hundred square miles or, say, a plot of land twenty-two miles to a side. "No wonder you have to get up at two in the morning," we remarked.

"Well, it isn't the biggest *fazenda* in the Matto Grosso by a long shot, but it's a nice, comfortable size. I can keep my eyes on everything. This is primarily a breeding ranch, as they may have told you. We drive the cattle up to another ranch of the Company's, nearer the railroad, to fatten."

Don Carlos yawned and stretched. "Nine o'clock, think I'll go to bed. You do what you like. There will be chocolate for you in the morning whenever you want it. And give the women any clothes you have to wash. Don Georges will show you around."

"I think they'd like to see a roundup," said Don Georges.

"Yes. Tell you what. In a few days we're going to have a big one. All four of us can go together and sleep overnight at the *retiro*. How's that? Fine. Well, *boa noite!*"

And thus we began our long stay at the *fazenda*. . . .

It is still pitch dark here in one of the cowboys' *retiros* where we have spent the night, when we are awakened by Don Carlos saying it must be one o'clock and time to be stirring. We are lying here, the three of us and Don Georges, in hammocks strung across the slat-sided porch of the *galpão,* this little shack. Through the wide cracks in the wall we can see the faint starlight on the wet grass outside.

Don Carlos calls out something in Guaraní, and after a moment a sleepy-looking woman comes to the door with a candle. She is not a pure Indian type; her shaggy brown, bobbed hair frames a face that might be German: there are many Teutons in Paraguay. . . . She smiles at us, lined up in our four rope hammocks, and goes back to start the fire. Presently she brings water, and each of us in turn takes a mouthful, spitting it out on the hard dirt floor. This is the opening ceremony, besides being a sanitary custom, of the *chimarrão,* to which we had been introduced on our first night.

Here at the *retiro* they use the *guampa,* a cow's horn: the woman hands it first to Don Carlos. The finest possession of any shack is its *bomba,* the silver tube with a strainer at the bottom end. When Don Carlos is done he hands the *guampa* back to the woman, who refills it with hot water, and it goes about the circle, always clockwise.

For perhaps half an hour the horn goes around, the woman patiently standing before us, kettle in hand, her wide bare feet protruding from beneath her dress. One of us asks if we will go out to wrangle the horses. No, the *comitiva,* the men working this corral, is already out and will be back soon with the troop. The white troop today, Don Carlos adds. Three horses for each rider, some thirty all together.

"There are different colors," Don Georges explains. "Besides the white troop, we have a sorrel and a mixed one, too. That is not for art's sake. When you see a white horse in with the sorrels, for example, you know a fence needs repairing. It is the same way with the cattle."

While he is speaking the woman's husband, the *retireiro* here, comes quietly to the door, still very sleepy. His brown poncho (they call it a *pallinha*) hangs nearly to his feet. Hardly more than a boy, yet with strong, clear-cut features and very black, unruly hair. He takes his saddle and sheep's wool overthrow from the wall, and disappears into the night. Faintly, from somewhere over the low ridge that rises beside the *retiro,* comes a strange murmur, conveyed to us as much in the earth itself as on the still air.

Gradually it becomes articulated, louder, bearing down upon us. Going outside, we are just in time to see a ghostly herd of pure white horses gallop over the rise and down past us to the paddock. A weird effect, the starlight falling on the moving forms, which appear not separately but as a mass. The cowboys, wrapped in their brilliant scarlet blankets, bring up the rear, shouting in Guaraní. Now they dismount in the enclosure, and we are treated to a remarkable sight. Waving their arms, the men shout at the troop of horses, which tamely fall back against the fence, facing the cowboys in a long line, as if ready for parade. We express our admiration: never have we seen such training outside a circus.

Don Carlos is surprised at our amazement. "What good is a horse that won't do what you tell him?" he asks. "All the troops will do this. You'll see them do the same thing in the open pasture later today."

His matter-of-factness does not alter our admiration, flavored as it is by the impact of so many unfamiliar customs and the brilliant dress of these Indians, the starlight picking out only their scarlet *puitans* and the white horses.

There are three things every cowboy is sure to have: the *chiripá,* the *puitan* and his revolver. The *chiripá* is the loin cloth, which Don Carlos is also wearing although most *fazendeiros* scorn this native breechclout. Many of the men's are mere elongations of their plaid shirts, which they pull up between their legs and fasten under their belt in front. Over this they are very likely to wear a fringed apron of

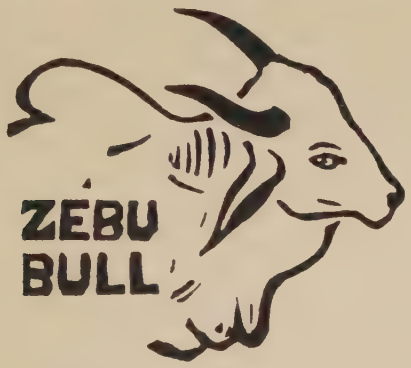
soft deer's hide, to protect them from rope burns when they are lassoing. The red *puitan* is a blanket, not a poncho; the latter is made with a slit so that they can put their heads through the center. It costs half a month's wages at the store, and is made of fine wool, invariably dyed red. The revolver, too, is a necessity, as is the long knife. Considering that these men make the equivalent of six or seven American dollars a month, their wardrobe is expensive to acquire. The rest of their costume is optional: the sombrero may be of straw or felt, like an American cowboy's; the silk neckerchief red or blue, depending on the political leanings of the Paraguayan wearer, or simply any gay color; if they are wealthy some month they will buy boots, otherwise they may go bare-footed and bare-legged, or wear shoes and a legging which comes up over the knees in the manner of a Wellington boot. The complete costume is set off by the handsome physique of these bronzed men. Until we step up beside them we do not realize how small they are, their proportions are so perfect. No wonder Don Carlos prefers them to the Brazilians.

It is still dark as we set out on the sandy road, the spare horses trotting ahead of us; their forms, as they emerge from darkness in a hollow or stand against the night sky, are silhouettes. In the east a faint glow appears, first a cool white, imperceptibly growing warmer in tone. Form develops out of pattern — the scraggly brush, the horses and ourselves, take on a third dimension. Blackness turns to color, the dull flat greens deepen against the vibrant sky, the red *puitans* grow brighter. We scarcely talk. Once Don Carlos remarks that motor cars may be all right when one is in a hurry, but that there is nothing so fine as a horse. And once a cowboy, seeing the morning star, says very simply, "*Que bonita!*"

Just before sunup we come to a gate, and passing through, the riders spread out to right and left. This is the pasture where the roundup will take place. Becoming custodians of the horses, we ride straight ahead, occasionally hearing a dis-

tant shout. Don Georges rides with us; it is seldom that he is able to leave his store and he is as excited as we are. When the cattle hear the shouting, he tells us, they start for the salt troughs, and there the roundup is made. They are always eager for more salt; every month the *retireiro* must bring new bags of it, for there is none in the rock or the grass except after the land has been burned off every August, at the beginning of the Brazilian springtime.

Now the sun is up and occasionally we have a glimpse of zebus running through the scrub trees and small bushes which cover much of this rolling country. More and more come



into view as we approach the roundup, some nervous and running, others resigned and bored walking in single file. This is the largest pasture in the *fazenda,* nearly seven miles across. We begin to feel the sweep of the drive, all lines converging upon a single meeting place. As the trail begins a long, slow ascent the country becomes "cleaner," with less scrub, and topping the rise we find, spread out below us, a great flat-bottomed basin, the far side terminated by a narrow ribbon of green trees along a stream. In the center of this tremendous meadow, like the hub of some gigantic wheel, is the roundup. Cattle by the hundreds stand quietly around the salt troughs, like people at an auction gathering in a county fair: the confusion of the colors from this distance,

the sense of latent movement, and the low mumbling mob-scene sounds all contribute to the strange feeling that this might be a gathering of human beings — or perhaps a purely geometric pattern somehow imbued with life.

Out from the hub in all directions run the spokes, each one made by a single line of cattle heading towards the center, each spoke ended by a man on horseback. Perhaps we might find such a perfect pattern, such a neat design, repeated in a crystal seen beneath a microscope. But here it is on a giant scale, dynamic, created artificially by man, yet utterly dependent on nature for its setting. . . .

Now as we ride down the slope and into the basin, the scene changes rapidly. Just as before dawn the black pattern turned to colored form, so now the masses are broken to reveal individuals. The bellowing of the cattle is chopped into the sounds of hundreds of individual animals. Off to one side two zebu bulls are fighting, driving each other back and forth: the dry, crisp noise of clashing horns rises above the general din. Don Carlos joins us and we ride around the herd, the old cows turning towards us as we circle. The last scattered heads have been gathered in. The next few hours will be hard riding, and it is time to change horses. A little way off, at a green spot beside a water hole of red mud, the cowboys line up the horses again, this time without benefit of fence or rope. They pick out the horses by throwing a halter about their necks, and saddles are changed. Later, we shall again change.

But if the cattle are quiet near the salt trough, they are the opposite when we start to drive them back up the trail. There are fourteen hundred of them, all looking for the salt which they had expected to find, most of them quite determined to stay until it is brought. We all join in the attempt to get them started off as one body, dashing back and forth behind the obstinate, milling animals, shouting and waving our arms. But it is impossible to keep them together; they straggle off in all directions, and we must be after them, dashing off at

a full gallop, trying to head them back into one compact herd.

This is no Sunday ride on the cinder path, for the ground is pitted with holes, thousands of them, and in this hell-for-leather riding the horse is sure to stumble — so often, Don Carlos says, that some of the cowboys have become used to falling and try to do an acrobatic somersault when their horses go out from under them. The plague of the land is the *tatú,* the little shell-backed armadillo which makes these holes in its search for ants. We have heard about the ants ever since we arrived in Brazil; we have seen their huge red hills, often three feet high, dotting a whole field. That is why you must always sleep in hammocks, and why the *tatú* must never be killed: its holes are the lesser of two evils. Often enough, Don Carlos tells us, the horse breaks a leg if the hole is made by the *rabo-molle,* the soft-tailed *tatú* which ingeniously makes a perfect hole, just the size of a horse-hoof.

Now a few of the great zebu bulls, their long pointed ears flapping, have run out from the herd, defying us to drive them back. It doesn't matter; they aren't wanted for the branding. The young calves, some of them now as much as eight months old and feeling quite independent, running out in all directions, are much more important. Once, after the herd is fairly under way, two or three young zebus break loose and the cowboys have to chase them back across the basin. They refuse to be turned, running around in circles until the men rope them as a last resort. Even then the calves balk, some of them flopping down, exhausted, and either they must be dragged back to the herd, or the dozen police dogs, which are helping us, nip them until they get up. Meanwhile the cattle have lost momentum and have finally stopped. The whole process of getting under way must begin again.

Still, the farther from the salt troughs, the quieter they act, venting their resentment with their mournful bawling, and gradually they straggle out into a long file that winds over the rolling country. Exactly like the covered wagon days. Great clouds of red dust swirl up, completely hiding us as we

ride behind the herd. A few head still try to break away; we begin to know these individualists. There are a tan-colored cow and her calf which act like naughty children, trying to escape without detection, and at the rear, a lean grey cow that charges everyone who attempts to drive her. It is fun dodging, but one rider doesn't see her soon enough and his horse is gashed in its hind leg, an accident which luckily doesn't seem to bother it.

Work, hard work, and more of it: that is what Don Carlos had said. But we understand why he enjoys it and why he likes the Paraguayan Indians for cowboys. There is a sympathy among them all out here, riding till the sweat pours down, yelling till the dust parches their throats. The cowboys laugh and joke as they suddenly wheel off through a thicket after a stray calf, laugh as an old bull charges them, and laugh when one of them nearly falls.

The horses are like polo ponies in their responsiveness: turning on two legs, anticipating each move of the cow they are chasing, swinging around a tree at full gallop with only an inch to spare. This is a fine, reckless sort of life, food for the hot blood of these Guaranis. And it is good to join them, to feel the burning wind, and the galloping animals under us, never thinking whether the horse will fall, though the red bumps of earth which mark the *tatú* holes are everywhere. Now the sun beats down with tropical fervor, there is hardly a shadow in the glare; it seems an age and a different world from the cold darkness and the heavy dew of early this morning.

Some of the youngest calves begin to drop back to the rear. It is no use forcing them to keep up, and one very small one, which Don Carlos says has a bad case of worms, flops down in the cool shade of a tree. It will wait there until the herd comes back two days from now. The dogs enjoy the sport tremendously, nipping and barking, slobbering and panting as they grow overheated. About eleven we reach the gate again and change to our last relay of horses, wiping

the sweat and foam from the others' backs with bunches of grass. One calf makes a dash for freedom along the fence line, and is dragged back ignominiously at a rope's end.

Don Carlos is talking with the foreman, a big strong-looking man. Later we learn that this cowboy's brother was shot to death the night before in Campo Grande. It doesn't seem to bother him, Don Carlos says. Here in the Matto Grosso they say the man who is killed is the guilty one; the man in the right has the steady hand and the quicker draw.

From here on things go more easily. The cattle seem to be tired and make less trouble, the salt troughs are forgotten. Once we dip down to a marshy spot which Don Georges says bears a lake in the rainy season, and the cattle spread out, floundering through the swamp. Water has been scarce this year, the rains are late and disappointingly light.

We go down a dry sandy road now, through the *serrado*, the brush that makes the roundup in some pastures a day's work. Just before the *retiro* comes in sight there is a fine panorama, seen from above. We are behind the cattle at the end of the long procession. The leaders far ahead have already gone into a sharp dip made by a creek and are crossing the narrow bridge to the open pasture on the other side. There they flow out once more; with the bridge as a bottle neck between the two now equal groups, they form a perfect hourglass. Then we are down at the bridge ourselves waiting for the last of the herd to cross, shoving and nosing one another as they find themselves confined. One calf has fallen through the wire railing and is splashing in the creek. Don Carlos scrambles down into the mud with two other men and together they hoist the animal to the bank. But it has a broken shoulder, the bones of its foreleg pushing out at a weird angle, and it hobbles off on three legs after the herd.

In a few minutes more the roundup is completed, the cattle driven across another swampy place and up a narrow lane to the corral, tired but still bellowing.

We drop back to the *retiro* and unsaddle. Lunch will be

ready presently, the broiled meat called *churrasco* and the white tuber, *mandioca* — the two staples of the Indian diet. But first we must have *terere*, which is like the *chimarrão* we had this morning except that added to the yerba maté is cold water. Again we are sitting in the four hammocks, passing around the cow's horn, sucking on the silver tube, the bare-footed woman standing with her kettle, filling and refilling the *guampa* for us. . . .

Sunset, and the *fazenda* again. We had ridden back through the scrub country and up over the ridge where the eucalyptus Don Carlos planted stood green against the blue sky; on over a bridge and past the corral, through the line of mango trees with their pointed, shining leaves forming an archway overhead.

After the hard day the full beauty of this tropical setting came to us again. Because we were hot, dirty and weary, a

new realization of the old scene swept over us. Even the red tiles of the house looked inviting and welcoming in the midst of the garden and trees — the great *flamboyant* with its flame-colored blossoms near the store and warehouse; the lemon and lime trees, heavy with their fruit, and the multitude of orange trees, neglected by all except ourselves and the children; the *abacateiros,* avocado pear trees, where we could pick our own salad any day before meal time; the roses and asters, and the orchids. And the clear stream, which comes down past the house to serve for washing and the outdoor shower bath, past the old well and on to the horse trough, through a mill for grinding corn, and finally to the pig pen. . . . On our beds, clean clothes, fresh from the washing that takes place every day. All this luxury, of fruit and food and color and smells, to come back to, to submerge oneself in after a long day. No wonder Don Carlos liked to work hard, when he had this oasis to return to. . . .

Supper time, and we all gathered around the long table at the end of the veranda. As usual, Don Carlos looked askance at the lantern above our heads, most of its light obstructed by a pink paper frill. Tonight he could stand it no longer; despite the *senhora's* moans he tore away the decoration. " After all, *Carnaval,* Easter-time, is over," he countered her protests. The old, familiar argument about lighting, common to every household.

The great soup tureen was placed before the *senhora* and we passed our plates — eleven of them. For besides Don Carlos and his wife, Don Georges, the Bookkeeper, and ourselves, there were the *senhora's* niece, now Don Georges' fiancée, and the four little children, Carlito and Michael, Luís and Sarita. The men are always joking about the food, but the man-cook does a good job out in his kitchen with its clay-bench stove. Inevitably, there is *churrasco,* meat from an old cow they have killed, and delicious buttered noodles, one of the most popular dishes in Brazil. Always, too, plenty of rice and beans.

"Well, what did you think of my Indians?" Don Carlos was asking us. "Guaraní is a damn funny language, you know. The woman at the *retiro* said to me today, 'The chicken killed the fox.'" He explained the joke in Portuguese to the rest of the table. "That is the way they talk in Guaraní. All the verbs are — what do you call it? — passive. She meant, of course, that the fox killed — what's that?"

A great commotion suddenly arose from the chicken yard, the fowls squawking and making a frightful racket. Just then shouting was added to the din. "*Lobinho!*" everyone cried at once, and chairs were overturned as we all ran for the coop. By a flashlight we could see a hideous-looking fox, about to pounce on his prey. Three chickens lay dead already and the others were all trying to cluster on one high roost.

It was the nastiest looking animal we ever hoped to see, when Don Carlos finally shot it with his revolver: a huge fox with a long brush, and heavy as lead. Its feet were more like cloven hoofs than the paws of an ordinary fox, and its mouth was still distorted in a repulsive snarl. They left it there, as a warning to its kin.

Don Carlos came back to the table, muttering imprecations. "I do not understand men who like to hunt and kill poor animals," he remarked, "but the *lobinhos* deserve death. They and the *tucanos,* the birds that eat our fruit and the chickens' eggs." His wife reminded him of the *lobo vermelho,* the red wolf, and he nodded. "You'd hardly believe it, but that wolf stands as high as a six months' old colt. They're very rare now, but when I first came here I shot one right at our door."

"Are there many dangerous animals about?" we asked.

Don Carlos laughed. "The other day I got a letter from my mother in Paris. She enclosed a clipping from a paper telling about the wild and dangerous state of Matto Grosso. Now she will never come to see me. But still, we have some good stories."

"Yes, especially that snake," Don Georges put in. "We caught a boa constrictor that had been killing the calves. It was thirteen meters long — about forty feet. I measured it myself."

It was hard to believe that anything like this could happen in such a peaceful spot, all of us sitting on the front of the veranda again, well-fed, relaxed, bathed by a cooling breeze, hearing the victrola play *Santa Fé*, a favorite *fazenda* dance. And listening to Don Carlos so calmly and matter-of-factly recounting his routine work the year round. We had started him off by saying we were a bit confused: how often, for instance, were these roundups made? And what did he do the rest of the time?

"We have to salt and cure the cattle of worms every month," he began. "Zebus don't have many worms, but for some reason the black ones are more subject to them — I suppose because their backs absorb the sunlight and that helps the parasites breed — so we have few of that color. . . . Doing all that takes twenty-nine days of every month," he chuckled, "and between times, each cowboy has to ride the fences twice a month near his own *retiro*. The branding is just beginning now; that's what the roundups are for, of course. Soon we'll begin to wean the calves and separate the young bulls from the heifers. The new calves begin to drop about May and keep appearing on into our southern winter. By August the cows are in heat again and we put the bulls back with them. That is just after we've burned off all the pastures."

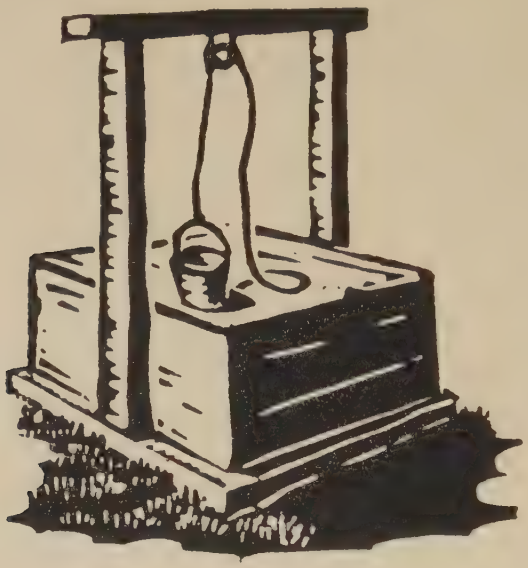
We expressed our surprise at this procedure.

"Oh, yes, that must be done. Good for the grass, and the ash is a good purge for the cattle. We always have to do it after the full moon. Sounds like an old superstition? I thought so too, but we should have no grass at all if we burned it at any other time. You see, the lizards and bugs lay their eggs just before the full moon. It wouldn't do to have a

lot of larvae coming out and eating up the grass just as it started to grow again."

"You're going to take us to the branding tomorrow, aren't you?"

"If you can be up at one o'clock."



"Yi — eah! Who — oee!"

The cowboys are shouting, waving their arms. The cattle, inside the big corral, are milling confusedly, raising the dust to the hot sun. From our seats on the high fence posts we watch the pattern slowly take shape: an endless twisting, like a giant game of crack-the-whip, the red cattle swarming and turning, bellowing and snorting and blowing, the calves bawling, until finally out of this mass one clear, circling line becomes visible. Starting in the middle of the corral, they begin circling, one after the other, until the outer circles edge the fence all about. Now it is like a circus, and these the trained animals. The rhythm is established.

Don Carlos, seated on the top of the corral, his feet on either side of a chute, beneath him two gates, shouts the word. The men open the far gate, the cattle rush forward. Other cowboys are ready for them in the narrower pen. With pieces of cloth, executing turns in the best bullfighting manner, they separate the cows and bulls from the calves to be branded, shooing the older cattle back, letting the calves come forward and into a separate pen. This is the first step, the first weeding, but not all the calves are caught.

Some of them, following their mothers so closely that in the narrow chute their heads are pinned to the sides by the big flanks, come down to the two gates which Don Carlos operates from above. With both hands he swings open the gate — for the cows or the calves. Right, left, right, left, until the sweat pours down from under his battered felt sombrero. Sometimes a calf tries to sneak past, and like a flash, he has caught its head in the door. Instinctively it draws back and in that instant of hesitation the forbidden door is slammed, the other opened, its only means of escape.

Now the bellowing is worse than ever, it seems to choke the air: the calves crying for their mothers, the cows answering, the bulls trumpeting in deeper tones. The stream is constant, the red backs rushing forward, backing, charging. Through the bawling and the mooing sound the cries of the men, the slam of the chute gates, the thud of cattle pushed against the bars. No traffic jam or subway crush was ever equal to this — nor so dextrously handled.

Don Carlos had called us at one o'clock this morning, and after a heavy breakfast of French toast we had started off in his Ford, bouncing across the country in the darkness and the cold, Don Georges and the foreman hanging to the rails of the truck's back end. Again in the half-light before dawn we had seen the roundup, this time from close at hand, while we waited at the *retiro* with Don Georges, wrapped in our blankets, glad for the hot maté. . . .

Now the first job is done; five hundred calves, varying in size and age, are safely penned. The cows and bulls and steers are waved back into the big corral. Already a little Indian, nicknamed Tatú, with a fringed apron so long it drags the ground in front, has started the fire for the branding irons. Don Carlos jumps down from his high post, landing with the agility of an acrobat. Today he wears the full *bombachas;* those together with his yellow silk neckerchief make him look even shorter.

While some of the men let the calves back through the chute, a boy comes into the empty corral with a horse. From his saddle extends a rope which slides through a hole in a post. Two men stand at the swinging doors of a small pen, holding a rope which is formed into a loose slip knot. They hand the rope through, another man fastens the noose around the head of an unsuspecting calf and — crack! — the horse is whipped, starting away from the post. The calf is dragged through the doors towards the post, its hind feet held by a rope with which the men have quickly caught them.

Now everything happens like lightning. Two men run forward, one seizes the head of the calf, another a foreleg, still another has captured the tail. Even when the calf is large it is not often more than a moment's work to throw the animal, always on its left side. The little Indian comes running, hot branding irons raised in the air. Don Carlos takes them, steadies the animal with his foot, and with one iron brands the number six (for 1936) upon the right haunch. The other iron is a circle, the *fazenda* mark, on the haunch or shoulder, depending on whether the animal is male or female. A slap, and the animal is let up, its bellowing ceases, and it trots out the lower gate into the corral to find its mother.

All this a matter of not more than twenty seconds, done with a speed and efficiency, even as the day wears on, that does credit to the Paraguayans, and not a little to Don Carlos' generalship. Like so many aspects of the *fazenda* life, it is

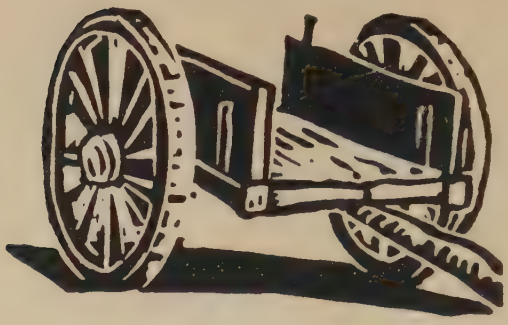
quite a different procedure from the roping and branding of our own West.

And the cowboys love it. The foreman has been counting, and insists there has been one more than the three hundred and forty-one which Don Carlos counts. They bet a can of *marmelada;* Don Carlos admits that he will probably lose. The foreman's job is to castrate the calves. With a bloody knife he stands ready to do his work while the irons brand. Only seven per cent of the cattle are bulls: Don Carlos chooses those he wants to spare as they come through. By castrating while the calf is still suckling, he tells us, the mother will look after it.

Although it is a rough business, the calves seeming to fall with a thud that knocks out their breath, the air smelling of burning hair, the sun beating down and the dust rising in clouds, the Indians laugh and joke through the long day of it. They work in shifts, stopping to have cold maté, the *terere,* thus becoming the audience and booing every time a calf is not downed instantly. Don Georges takes his turn and comes back to the fence hot and out of breath. " I won't let them know it's hard work for me," he confesses, " but I'd rather wrestle two men any day."

At last five hundred, marked and counted — and also watched for disease or worms. If there are worms, a bit of medicine in the sore, covered over with anything handy to keep the air out — horse dung or mud. Out on the range they say tobacco juice is as good as any preparation; at any rate, it is an excuse always to have a cud in the cheek.

We watch the men now as they mount and open the gates of the corral. Slowly the red cattle move out, edging and pushing or hanging back perversely until the men shout and swear at them. They climb the rise, the men coming afterward, finally disappearing from sight. But long after they have gone we hear the faint call of the cowboy: *Taw, taw, taw. Taw, taw, taw. . . .*



Some mornings, through the hushed, warm air a sound comes to us from far across the red plains. The first time we heard it, it was like a giant bumblebee, slowly, slowly coming nearer. And later, we frequently mistake it for the incessant blowing of a great cow's horn, like the one that hangs by the table on the veranda. For an hour it may continue, until it becomes part of the landscape, like the endless chirr of crickets on a summer's night, and we are hardly conscious of it. So that we are surprised when someone points out, topping the ridge and against a blue sky, a hide-covered cart, drawn by six pairs of white oxen. Slowly, very slowly, like the procession of these peaceful days, it approaches. Out of the surrounding vastness which seems to stretch on forever, far beyond what we can actually see. Heading for the ranch house in the Beautiful Copse.

As it comes through the mango trees the now familiar screeching fills the air: this sound comes from the huge solid-wood wheels which turn, axle and all, beneath the wooden frame of the *carreta*. We go down to the store to see it.

Perhaps it has come from Campo Grande, or Entre Rios, below us, nearer to the River Paraná. There are always some provisions to buy at the store and we like to watch the transaction. A twist of black tobacco, a cake of salt which has come all the way from the swamps of Morosso, far above Bahia on the northern coast. Or the brown sugar, which comes from sugar cane yet is reminiscent of our own Ver-

mont. And in exchange, the men may have a few wild-pig hides to sell. . . . Or it is a cart with bamboo sides, full of corn for the pigs. We watch the men unyoke the oxen in the corral, loosening the leather thongs which bind the wooden cross-pieces. The lead pair take it calmly, but there are two that must be new to hauling. Before they can be unfastened they charge the other beasts, pulling the wooden tongue of the cart after them. We run for the fence. But they are merely frightened; with their inside horns tied to each other, they are not free to do much damage. We walk back towards the house.

In the office three little boys are reciting their lessons out loud. The Bookkeeper and Don Georges are their teachers, and reluctantly every morning they sacrifice a few hours from the important business of the ranch. The children will tell us all the names of the prize zebu bulls, which have a specially-planted pasture back of the house, or lead us through the woods to the lagoon where the ducks are, and sometimes a baby alligator. From the wash-house comes the voice of the *senhora;* there is an upturned stool, a book on the floor — Sarita is gone. Don Georges sighs and shrugs his shoulders. We go into the store. Don Miguel, whom we first met in Campo Grande, has come out to take inventory and order more goods from São Paulo. He is a Valencian, from Spain; the Bookkeeper was once an accountant in Rio. And Don Georges, with his years in Paris, in Geneva, up the Amazon with a scientific expedition. They have come here from all parts, drawn to this new land.

Don Georges likes to tell us of the Amazon. He had gone to collect birds and animals for a museum in Berlin and to follow the Rio Negro above Manáos, the Amazon's main city a thousand miles from its mouth. From there he had gone to find the most exasperating and inviting goal of many an expedition — the source of the Orinoco, hidden among the mountains, barred by unfriendly savages. He has tales of a hundred varieties of monkeys, of the white sloth which hangs

BANANA
MAMÃO

motionless from the trees, of the orchids, rare varieties and new ones which have never been classified.

"You must go there to see a very important side of Brazil!" he finally exclaims.

Yes, of course we should like to go. But this is a different journey; we have set our minds on going westward, that is enough to handle at one time. Yet through his words we begin to feel the immensity of Brazil, the whole weight of the endless, untraveled Amazon country above us, pressing down. Not one river, but a continent of rivers, flowing from both north and south, east and west, so that always there are flood-times when it is raining on one or the other side of the equator. Vast tangles of green jungles with brown waters swirling, until at the worst floods there are only *altos*, the high places, Don Georges tells us.

"Would you like to be back there?" we ask him.

He shrugs. "One must make a living. Museums cannot hire many men; I had to pay to go. . . . Every traveler who comes to Brazil asks why do we not profit more from this rich Amazon, where there is so much sun and water and anything will grow. You cannot realize what it is. It is not land, but water — a network. What can you do when from May till August there is nothing but water? Your fields are washed away. Of course, there is fine wood, but it is too expensive to exploit the lumber business on the upper Amazon. Besides, we should ruin ourselves. As we did with rubber. It is not just a question of exploitation."

Some inkling comes to us. We have begun to feel it before. "What do you mean — what about Brazil's future?"

Don Georges laughs a little sardonically. Unlike some others we have talked to, he is a Brazilian. Yet he has a Swiss passport, too; if you are born here you become Brazilian, no matter what nationality your father may have. He has affinities with Europe, he is exasperated with Brazil even as he aches to see her come into her own. "Name me one product Brazil has not failed in. During the war her rubber was needed, and she kept raising the price. Now your American

tire companies have planted their own rubber, in the East Indies. Something will happen to coffee, the same way. It has already happened to the maté. . . . I should like to see a good dictator, a king without hereditary rights, rule this country. They should even sterilize him so that he can have no children. But a strong man who — "

He stops, his theorizing forgotten: a car is coming down the road. Perhaps it is one of the neighboring *fazendeiros,* and then maté must be served. The *senhora* leaves her work and comes to sit on the porch. Two of the nearest neighbors are her cousins, men with dark faces but Irish eyes inherited from a pioneer grandfather. Or perhaps it is the weekly mail truck, and Don Miguel will find a whole sheaf of *El Pueblos,* the Valencian paper he still receives.

No man was ever more proud of his own city than Don Miguel, although he has been away from home for years, working as a lithographer in France, in an Italian theater, with the bullfighters in Mexico City, and has roamed over all of South America. Today the car approaching turns out to be the mail truck. The papers are nearly six weeks old, but he opens them eagerly. Here — listen to this: and he reads to us in his Castilian accent. But where is Monday's paper? *Caramba!* No account of the bullfights! Sadly he reads the announcements of the Saturday before, giving the kind of bulls, the names of the matadors and *banderilleros.* This man is *formidable:* everything is *formidable* to Don Miguel, a word which he rolls out with a fine, full sound. We try to cheer him, but he is inconsolable. Papers have come from São Paulo as well, but in their columns the States hardly rates a notice. Strange how little difference it makes, how little we care now. Secretly we are pleased: this lack of cables from the States is a deserved slap at our own papers' condescension towards South American news. And our own growing unconcern with world events is a reflection of these men's attitude. There is a life they have come to lead here on the *fazenda,* full bodied in itself. . . .

One afternoon the Bookkeeper and Don Georges ask us if we should like to go fishing. Four horses are saddled, and from the cook we beg the heart of a cow just killed, for bait. While Don Carlos is away these two have taken it upon themselves to show us around. We must see all that the ranch has to offer. Do we like *abacates,* the alligator pears, fresh, instead of creamed with lime for dessert? Then the Bookkeeper takes a long pole and brings down several to ripen for a day in the sun. Have we ever eaten a *palmito,* the heart of a palm? Don Georges goes out with an axe and we watch him fell the tree, cut open the white bark at the very top and finally extract, after layer upon layer has been stripped off, the delicate kernel which is like a large artichoke heart when cooked and creamed.

And now, as we start out for the river, the Bookkeeper insists that we ride his two mares. All like to laugh at his pride and the fastidious care he takes of them, but they are beautiful animals; for one he wants fifteen hundred *milreis* (one *conto* five hundred, they express it) — about eighty dollars. In this country a mule is worth much more than a horse, perhaps three times more. For thirty dollars you can buy a serviceable horse, bridle and saddle!

Our destination is the line of green which defines the Vaccaria River, and we ride across the planted pasture with its red ant hills, past the new zebu bulls which Don Carlos has just bought from another *fazenda.* They are pure-bred; the long pointed ears and pronounced humps between the shoulders will be modified when they are crossed with Herefords or Shorthorns. Their calves, they tell us, will be three or four times as large as they. As we approach them they scatter, running with a fast, loping gait then suddenly turning and watching us curiously. Now that we are accustomed to their peculiarities we see why cowmen call them beautiful.

When we come to the creek the Bookkeeper, who is the inveterate fisherman of the ranch, gives us pole and line and bait, and we take our places in openings through the scrub

which allow access to the water's edge. The procedure, we are informed, is to throw the line far out and let it float down with the current.

It is a beautiful warm day — winter, now, in the tropics. Overhead a hawk glides gracefully against the clouds, or the great *urubú,* the repulsive black vulture, which is pleasant to see only in the air. Now and then the screaming of a flock of green parrots, their yellow breasts visible for a second against the blue sky. Never do they fly alone, and the story is that they will go miles around rather than fly over a large body of water. Wherever there is an orange or sweet lemon tree they gather and spread the seeds far out in the *serrado.*

We feel about us today the presence of abundant life, of things growing and animals and birds feeding. Certainly we are aware of a nasty little fly that sounds exactly like a mosquito. Yet the fish seem to have taken the day off, except for one the Bookkeeper finally catches. We persuade him to go on along the bank to the rapids. While he contentedly fishes we take off our clothes and, clinging to the rocks, let the cool water wash over us. For some curious reason there is a sudden outcropping of grey rock. If we took this stream, Don Georges tells us, we should eventually arrive at the Paraná, if we weren't eaten up by the mosquitoes at night. "But I do not advise this way; you would find nothing to eat and no people for days. It is not like going camping in the States."

With a suddenness which constantly catches us off guard the sun is going down, and we put on our clothes. The Bookkeeper is nowhere about. It is not impossible that he has wandered off and is lost; when he first came to the ranch he spent a whole day going around in circles, trying to find his way home. We start to look for him. Down below us in the bushes we hear swearing. There he is, balancing precariously upon a log, trying to untangle his line at the end. For a moment he sways, then with a splash he slips off.

"Come on," Don Georges urges him, "you've only lost a penny hook."

But he is intent upon retrieving it. Solemnly he hands up to us his revolver, his watch and cigarettes, and wades out farther, above his waist, pulling and tugging at the log. He is such a ludicrous sight that we would laugh were it not for his exaggerated seriousness. Heartlessly we leave him and go to saddle the horses, which are tied in the woods by a salt trough. And as the sun goes down and our forms, one before the other, change from silhouettes to vague suggestions, and the stars come out, we ride back again to the ranch.

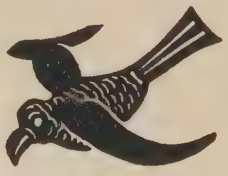
Almost every day one of the little boys comes running with the news that there are *tucanos* in the avocado trees, or bothering the chickens, and someone must go out with a shotgun

to kill them. This becomes rather a game, because Dickinson one day asked if he could get one in order to sketch it at close range. Now they are firmly convinced that we should stuff two or three and carry them back to the States. It is almost a temptation, at that. Whatever the damage they do, they are beautiful birds. Their large hooked orange bills almost overbalance the small black bodies of soft feathers,

with only a white spot on the breast, red beneath the short tail, and blue feet. Even their eyes are brightly colored: yellow, beneath a blue lid, and their tongues are red, thin and long for sucking eggs.

Small events such as this compose our days. It is good to stay long enough to have them repeated, weaving a kind of lazy pattern. To feel time our own. So that we may wander about, as we have started to do this afternoon. It is in a new direction, out across the stream and up the hill to the flowing country. The grass, as we leave the trail, is high now, burnt yellow in the sun, extending across this prairie to distant ridges which are blue in the afternoon sun. Here and there is a small copse.

Within the copses it is cool, fragrant with the *laranjinha*, whose flowers give off an odor like crushed orange blossoms. There are sounds of animals in the thickets, and we come upon a hole, freshly dug: probably the *tamanduá* which Don Carlos has been telling us about, one of the ant eaters. There are a hundred kinds of birds, but most interesting to us are the common ones with great long tails, dressed in buff and black — the *anú*. And the *quero-quero*, named so because its cry sounds as if it repeats the phrase: I want, I want. We come upon a trickle of a brook, falling down through the stones, and the old childish desire comes to us to build a dam. To scoop up mud, to gather sticks and stones. To stand in the water, bare-footed, and triumphantly watch the water rise; to mend quickly a rivulet which threatens the foundations. . . . Nothing is quite so satisfying. Perhaps if everyone found a secluded spot such as this, felt mud about his toes, stones in his hands, and sticks — it makes a difference, that is all: literally to have the feel of the earth. . . .



As we came back to the ranch we noticed the figure of Don Carlos limping from the store to the veranda. "What happened to you?" we asked when we caught up with him.

He made a wry face, almost as if he were ashamed of himself. "My horse stepped into one of those *tatú* holes and caught me underneath. I tried to puncture my belly with the silver pommel of my saddle, too. . . ."

"Then you're not feeling so cheerful this evening."

"I feel a lot worse about the kid who got shot today. One of my men was cleaning his revolver. The old story — didn't know it was loaded. And all they could do was put the boy in an ox cart to take him to Campo Grande."

"But he'll die before he gets there!"

Don Carlos shook his head. "We don't have ambulances," he said quietly.

That night, perhaps because he had been thinking about the wounded boy, Don Carlos began to tell us about his own life. We had heard snatches of it before, of course, but now he began to tell it in order. He was only thirty-six now, which meant that he had come here as a young man, after he had worked in a munitions factory in France during the war and had later been a mechanic in Algeria and French Somaliland, where he had helped build the railroad from Djibouti to Addis Ababa. No wonder the Italians were having trouble in that terrain, he said.

"But I never wanted to be a mechanic," he went on. "Funny thing, I almost went to the States. I was waiting in the American consulate, I remember, in Marseilles. The consul didn't come. All right, to hell with you, I said to myself, and walked across the street. And in five minutes I had my Brazilian visé. They were anxious for immigrants. A lot I knew about this country when I got here with my Dutch passport." He chuckled. "I stood it for five months in Rio, still being a mechanic, and finally went down to São Paulo. I never have liked that town. Only been back once in fifteen years."

"It must have been a good deal wilder out here at that time."

"Yes, the railroad had just been built. I came out part way on it, and the rest with one of those ox carts till I got to this *fazenda.* They put me to work as a cowhand at nineteen *milreis* a month. That would be a little more than a dollar, wouldn't it? But then the money was worth something."

They had told us in São Paulo how he had worked up, under the American manager, to the job of bookkeeper, learning the cattle business by riding all day, and keeping his books at night. We could see he had the same drive today that had given him his varied experiences as a boy. "The sensible part about you," we told him, "is that you're satisfied to stay here. You know when to stop."

"I never stop," he laughed. "If I did, there wouldn't be any *fazenda.*"

Someone had put a *polka Paraguaya* record on the victrola, and for a while we listened. The song opened with the usual quick strumming of guitars on two chords. There are always certain conventions: the holding of the last syllables of every verse, characteristic of all Latin American music; the chorus beginning with a guitar prelude. Always a pause, then very fast before the words. We had learned now to differentiate among some of the pieces, deserting the common ground of the totally uninitiated who think strange music "all sounds exactly alike." There were the queer titles—*Ca' Agüi, Ricüä, Nde Ke Guy Pe, Rojhaijú Yepé,* and all the rest.

"We hate to leave, but we must go soon," we told Don Carlos as the record ended. He expostulated. "Yes, we must. Now that we've got our money." We had had to send our travelers' express cheques back to São Paulo; the little bank in Campo Grande had never heard of them. During our weeks here we had consulted with Don Carlos over the possibility of routes and had studied inadequate maps. He had been down the Paraná to the famous Iguassú Falls, and strongly recommended that way. It was a good, round-

about route westward, which would eventually take us near Bolivia. And that seemed a good country from the few reports we had obtained.

" But it isn't a matter of catching a train from here on," Don Carlos reminded us. " You take what you can get."

" That's the way we like it. If it were an all-expense tour we wouldn't take it."

Don Georges had been standing, a little nervous and embarrassed, beside us. His fiancée, he finally explained, wanted to dance, and he could not negotiate the difficult steps of the *samba* and the *maxixe*. Would we. . . .

" We know less than you do about it! "

" You do the Charleston, don't you? "

There was no use explaining that the Charleston had fortunately been consigned to the grave ten years ago, or disappointing both him and the young lady. And so, for the first and only night, we attempted to dance the *maxixe*. To do it properly you must be something between a human windmill and a graceful professional ballroom dancer. But we tried. Fortunately for us we could work in shifts, but the poor girl must have been frightfully disappointed in us. We gave up entirely upon seeing her demonstration of the *samba* to the weird tunes of such things as *Sabiá Zangou-Se, Samba de Facto* and *Sá Colombina*.

Don Georges was probably a bit shocked at the later demonstrations. Actually, both of these dances are negroid in origin, like our own jazz. But the *samba* is particularly hot. Its music is reminiscent of the old jazz which enthusiasts and students will insist is the only good jazz; and the dance that goes with it is more lascivious by far than a Harlem strut or a Cuban rumba — and those are not generally done by the average dancer. It was too much for us, and the *senhorita* deserted us in despair.

" The last time I saw that much dancing was when the *revolucionarios* came through," said Don Carlos.

" When was that? "

" Only once were they in the mood to do any dancing, after

I'd killed some cattle for them. But they've been through three times since I've been here. In 'twenty-five and 'twenty-eight and again in 'thirty-two. Every three years: they're overdue now. Once they burned our bridge, and another time they took a whole troop of horses — left theirs behind, practically dead. They'd been riding hell-for-leather, three thousand of them, up from the south — Paraná and Rio Grande do Sul states. They camped over there in the planted pasture. The only other things they got away with were the tops to two silver sugar bowls."

"You'd never guess these people would ever rise to a revolution. They seem mild as a rule."

"Most of them don't get much fun out of life except when they have revolutions."

Don Georges took exception to this. "The revolutions may not prove anything," he said earnestly, "except that the people don't like autocratic rule."

"We thought you were all for dictatorships."

"Not the kind there has been in this country. To understand Brazil, you must realize that they have a 'boss' tradition in federal politics just as your cities have in the States. And what I resent most of all is everyone saying that Latin Americans have a temperamental incapacity for self-government. I do not agree."

Don Carlos had lost all interest in the conversation. "Leave politics to the city people, Georges," he suggested. "Before these fellows go I want to take them out for a last long ride."

"Really, we should leave tomorrow. It's a long way down to the river."

"Make it the day after, and tomorrow we'll ride out to Mirantes — that's one of the *retiros* you haven't seen."

"Don't say any more," we laughed, "you've persuaded us."

Behind us great fortress-like clouds rise straight up through the blue sky as we ride along above the river. So that we are dwarfed, three small figures on horseback beside the green *matto,* following a red gash in the brown grass. Today it is the sky, towering omniscient and ubiquitous, which gives the feeling of immensity to these open plains. A white *Juan-grande* wheels against the blue above us.

"Look — there! *Veados!*"

We follow Don Carlos' finger and see ahead of us, running for all they're worth, three deer, their red backs and bobbing white tails just visible above the grass. At least we have seen one form of wild life today.

Already the massive clouds are beginning to break up in their rush to overtake us, streamers and wisps scattering across the sky, although down here there is no suggestion of wind. We dip into hollows, splashing through streams. At every open stretch Don Carlos makes a wide detour across the meadows, hoping to scare up a *tatú* or a *tamanduá.* His figure becomes smaller, lost in the landscape, then he comes charging back, his great neckerchief flying, his feet far forward as he sits to the gallop. Behind us in the west, towards Capão Bonito, the low hills are being swallowed up by clouds which darken even as we watch. The sound of thunder rolls across to us, and in a moment the clouds behind open up, sending down purple shreds and streamers: rain.

As we come to a little lake, watering hole for the cattle in this pasture, it lies unrippled before the storm, reflecting the angry clouds. Only a few ducks swimming among the tall reeds break the smooth surface of the water. It is a stirring sight: on the far side a low-lying bar of trees is a dark bottle-green against the sky. Here in the foreground the brown and yellow Jesus Christ birds flutter on their graceful butterfly wings above the marshy edge: they are called so because they seem to walk on the water. The dark shapes we see in the water are alligators, Don Carlos says. He spies one that has crawled out on land, and pulls out his revolver. The alligator is green, quite small and ugly. At the sound of the shot a dozen *quero-quero* birds rise from the marsh, uttering their silly, raucous cry. . . .

The clouds are almost above us now, suddenly blotting out all but a weird yellow half-light, turning us into actors on a stage-set of limitless proportions. We mount again as the first raindrops begin to fall, and set off at full gallop across the sweeping range towards a row of eucalyptus trees, the *retiro*. Behind us the country is washed by a tremendous sheet of rain; we are barely a hundred yards ahead of it, flying through the deep grass that the rising wind whips back and forth.

Just as the downpour reaches us, drowning everything in a rush of sound and water, we dash up to the *retiro*, and with the help of the young *retireiro* who runs out to meet us, we carry our saddles up to the porch. Even in the rain this is a beautiful spot in the midst of so much open country. All about the house are planted bright flowers — the soft red *papola*, false rose bush, asters and blue morning glories.

" The foreman's wife planted all this when they lived here." Don Carlos shakes his head. " A bloody shame," he adds, evidently alluding to the woman.

" What's the matter? " We had seen her every day, coming to help with the washing from her house back of the *fazenda* garden.

" Didn't you hear the shouting last night? I haven't been to

bed at all." He speaks casually, but it is plain he doesn't relish the incident. He and the foreman, he goes on, had caught the wife with another man. One of the *fazenda* cowboys, supposed to be the foreman's best friend. Don Carlos had refused to believe the stories or the foreman's fears, but at last he had consented to a trap. The foreman supposedly went to Campo Grande. "I wanted to be with him to prevent any shooting. Took his gun away, but when we caught them I couldn't keep him from beating her. The other fellow ran away. I told him and the woman both to get off my *fazenda.* Can't have that, you know. The only trouble is, the foreman will have to find another woman — these Indians seldom marry, of course — to look after all the little children. . . . I had to stay up the rest of the night, watching the road to be sure the foreman didn't shoot the other fellow when he came back to take the woman away on a horse. She took her baby. . . ." Don Carlos turns and goes inside, glad to have told someone about it, yet eager to forget the incident. Nothing ever happens out here? Nothing but work? This story makes us realize how much the arbiter, the judge, Don Carlos must be. . . .

We follow him inside. It is a bare room, but spotlessly clean. The *retireiro* gives Don Carlos a little money he has collected for the use of the corral. All over this country there is a standard charge for this, extended to all the *boiadeiros* driving their cattle across country to market. These men make it their special business to pilot the herds, usually two or three thousand head, blowing their huge cow's horns as they go, traveling perhaps a hundred miles in ten days.

The wife of the *retireiro* comes to the door and asks if we should like some brown sugar tea. She speaks a little Spanish and is much more willing to talk than her husband, who is timid and has already vanished. Don Carlos asks her if she needs any provisions: maté, brown sugar, or the side of beef that each *retiro* gets once a month. No, she has quite enough.

He jerks his head after her as she leaves the room. "Never

knew that to happen before. I guess they're going to make a good pair." They have been here only three months, he says. Perhaps they are nineteen or twenty; Don Carlos is under no illusions as to their permanency, for all of these Indians come and go. All right, let them. The other day the cook for the cowboys thought he would leave. When he found no one urged him to stay, he changed his mind. Most of them do that; the only time off they demand is Holy Week, for the rest of the year they are willing to work seven days a week. "Of course, it's a lonely life out here," Don Carlos concedes. "I don't allow the women to go visiting one another, except to get medicine or tend a sick one. Some of the *fazendas* allow fiestas. That always leads to shooting, like drink. You know we prohibit liquor. These Guaranis are too hot-blooded; they act like savages if they get a little. . . . I don't mind a drink, myself. When I'm out branding on a hot day I think I'd give anything for a bottle of beer. But, funny thing, when I go into Campo Grande I usually just have ice cream."

The woman has brought in our tea and a whole bunch of bananas, just ripening. The hot drink tastes good, and we relax, waiting for the rain to pass.

Don Carlos is in a reflective mood. "I get along with my men because I like this kind of life. For a vacation I wouldn't mind going to Paris and seeing my mother. But I hate a tie and coat, you know? Thought I'd choke to death when I had to go down to São Paulo that one time. I was struck by lightning so I had to go to the hospital. The city man is damn funny. Goes around with a scowl on his face when he has everything in the world to amuse him. I suppose — if you like that life." His personality is as clear and hard as his grey eyes and his tough muscles. It is altogether good to talk to someone like this.

"What do you think of Brazil?"

He shrugs, as does anyone confronted with so general a question. But his answer is decisive enough: "I'll tell you

one thing about these people. Pick up a paper and you'll find it full of French words. The women like to talk French. Everything in Europe is grand. They think it's something to speak a language that hasn't anything to do with their lives. And they don't know there's anything west of the coast."

"We've sometimes had those thoughts, too. A lot of people in Rio admit the truth of it. But what can they do?"

"What can any country do?" Don Carlos says. "Corrupt politicians all over the world, if you ask me. If Brazil is ever to be really developed it's going to need a strong dictator."

"Suppose he's the wrong kind?"

"Any kind would be wrong for me. When they start telling me what to do and what to say, I'll leave the Matto Grosso."

Perhaps it is easy enough to condemn others, when your own judgment is tantamount to law, when you are surrounded only by these rolling plains. Yet it is healthy to clear the air with a robust contempt for the fumings and muddlings. . . .

It has stopped raining, the clouds are breaking, and in the west the sun comes through like a spotlight. The air is heavy with the scent of the *marvilha,* a magenta flower with a perfume like honeysuckle. In their garden they have planted pumpkins and *mandioca,* and out in back are *mamão* and orange and banana trees.

The sun shafts reach us, turning the trees to yellow-green against the sky. Overhead is the full circle of a rainbow.

The trail is full of water and the horses splash along stolidly. Twice Don Carlos sights a crowd of vultures and rides off to find what is attracting them. One cow he finds not quite dead, and has to shoot it; these vultures start to eat the eyes before death arrives.

As it darkens the sky clears, the storm falls back towards the horizons, a deep blue dome opening out above us. Only the clouds catch the belated orange light; then gradually

the color cools, leaving a warm glow along the western skyline until that, too, is dissipated by the cold light of the new moon.

Now we are absorbed into the dusk, forms moving through the darkness. We jog along, single file, the brightening moon reflected in the clear pools of water on the trail. At the river we cross a bridge after Don Carlos opens a gate, and approach the new corral of Campeiro. "Let's have one more maté," Don Carlos says, and presently the three of us are squatting in the mud-floored *retiro,* passing the *guampa* clockwise. Don Carlos talks to the *retireiro,* asks what he needs, who has been through recently. And in the flickering candlelight the woman refills the *guampa* from the black kettle. As if she had known all along that we were coming.

Outside a single palm tree comes into silhouette each time there is a distant flash of lightning. But it will be fine tomorrow. Only a league now to Capão Bonito over the familiar road: ahead is the grove of orange trees, always full of green parrots; here is the place where the owls are, and the lonely steer that belongs to some other *fazenda.* Feeling the freshness that comes only after rain, riding back to the ranch for the last time under a clear sky, the moon and the stars. Tomorrow Don Carlos will take us across to Serrote where the road runs near the *fazenda.* Once more westward, on our own. . . .

2.
TRANSITION

BROWN RIVER AND WHITE CASCADES

"ESPERE, SENHORES"

The brown, tropical River Paraná — our next objective. Brazil's spine: binding together whole regions of the interior, whole countries. Flowing down past Paraguay, into Argentina and miles below, south to the Atlantic. But before that, turning westward, carrying us near to the Andes of Bolivia. A transition, then, from tropics to mountains. . . .

One whole week of travel to go only two hundred and thirty miles, and still not quite to the brown river. Three separate trucks before we reach a tributary of the Paraná. Transportation, they say, is Brazil's main problem. Is there any transportation at all?

"*Espere, senhores, espere:* wait, wait, wait. . . ."

That is what we are doing.

In this bleak shack upon the plains to which Don Carlos has brought us, six leagues west of the *fazenda.* This is the third day here in Serrote, the third day the moronic, snag-toothed traveling dentist with the undershot jaw has been

staring at us: looking for a decayed tooth or broken filling with an x-ray eye.

The third day of "*espere, senhores*" on this military road between Campo Grande and Ponta Porã on the Paraguayan border: a single lonely house on the plains. . . . Yes, they say, there are trucks coming through every day, all the days. And so there are, military transports — going in the opposite direction, towards Campo Grande. . . . We have spent our time talking with the proprietor of this roadside hut, a gold-toothed, black-bearded Santa Claus. He wears a black band on his arm; that and his beard are symbols of the recent death of his young wife. He has deserted his rich *fazenda,* unwilling to go back to it alone, preferring to keep this provision store on the *caminho* in the midst of the rolling cattle country. Now on the second day he receives word that his father is ill in Campo Grande and he takes leave of us in his rickety old touring car with a jug of wine sitting on the seat beside him. Saying good-bye, reiterating *espere.* Why couldn't his father have been ill at a town in the other direction?

Now we are alone with the dentist. Sleeping in the one tiny back room with him. At night, like an evil bird, the shadow of his collapsible, revolving, tilting chair falls across our cots, while he growls and snores among his bottles and tables and torture instruments. Once he offers to clean our teeth: any excuse, apparently, to learn why miraculously and unlike most Brazilians we still possess our molars. There is no avenue of escape from his glassy leer: we scarcely dare to walk a hundred yards up the rutted road for fear a truck should pass. But occasionally we sit on the wooden bridge nearby. Watching for baby alligators in the muddy stream which flows between overgrown banks down to the brown river we hope some day to reach. . . . At night, drinking *cachaça,* the native sugar-cane whisky, and twiddling our thumbs. Three long days: a lesson in the meaning of Time.

A realization of that over-worked epithet, the land of *mañana.* A three-act farce, entitled "Patience." . . .

Eleven-thirty on the third night. An overloaded, wheezing truck, knocking on every cylinder, pulls in. Going in our direction! Sleepily, we climb aboard, dragging our bags up behind us. Starting on the first lap.

Jostling and swaying among piles of cartridge boxes, crates and packages, and a hard bottom of roof tiles. Scraping against a set of bed springs we cannot use, smelling a huge crate of onions we would not eat. Jolting through a black and misty night, our shepherds' *cubiertos* standing us in good stead. Over a road washed into paste by the recent rains; sticking and sliding and pushing on, finally getting completely stuck at three in the morning, crawling down into knee-deep mire to push and heave this miserable truck until we are free again.

But the road is hopeless; the headlights are like candles in a storm, and the driver says he is too tired to go on. At daylight he can pick out our way.

"*Espere, senhores, espere.*"

Lying for the next chilling four hours with our noses in the onions, our backs nudged by a dozen box corners, our legs entangled in a heap of tires. While the driver, supremely comfortable, sleeps on the bed springs which he has set up in the mud. . . .

In spite of all precautions, the next morning getting stuck immediately, waiting four hours while the inevitable little boy (who accompanies all trucks), does the work of digging us out, the driver standing by and issuing suggestions in Guaraní. Driving all the blistering day through the plains, shaken and boiled; arriving in Ponta Porã as it begins to rain late that evening. . . .

Ponta Porã, a town split in two by a strip of green which forms the international border line between Brazil and Para-

guay. A town most of Brazil has forgotten. *Queira dizer-nos;* is there transportation on to Campanario, the next town?

"*Sim, senhores, porém espere. . . .*"

Two nights and two days of waiting. This is becoming our theme song. Reminding us that speed and efficiency have not as yet ensnared every part of the world. . . . Finding here Valentino, who wants the whole town to know that he speaks English, and regales us all one evening by repeating, *All right, all right, mister:* you cannot make Latins realize that *senhor* (or in Spanish, *señor*) should be translated as "sir." . . . Setting foot on Paraguayan soil, in the deserted side of town which has seen livelier days. Explaining to the police and the military that we are harmless Americans, and that our passports are best read right-side up. Finding the drunken saloon owner in the billiard parlor, and being captured after a hard chase for a special evening of music in his own bar. . . . Wondering at times if these little towns straggle on, one after the other, till the road ends in nothingness. Wondering if the mail truck is really going. . . .

"*Espere, senhores, èspere.*"

Setting out, at last, one fine blazing morning, across more flat country, past more lonely *fazendas,* riding nearer to the river. Sharing our literal box-seat with a blind man and his two little children. And in the early afternoon, coming to the gate and property line of the Companhia Matté-Larangeira, the great organization which nearly monopolizes the production of yerba maté; in the confines of whose lands are half a dozen towns, one of which is Campanario, our destination. Have we a letter of introduction? No. Well, no importance; and they let us pass through with the truck.

Speeding down a smooth graded road, between the rows of green maté trees. To arrive at the sight now before us!

A model town. In the midst of the lower Matto Grosso, after a week among the desolate, forgotten plains. A town

with freshly painted houses and red roofs, with picket fences and electric street lights, and most of all, a great show ring, with jumps for horses!

Our truck takes us around this incongruity to the other side, where there is a little hotel. . . .

YERBA MATÉ AND JUNGLE RIVER

Later that afternoon we were requested to present ourselves at the Administration Office. There they said the Captain wanted to see us, and we were ushered into the inner sanctum.

A rather young-looking man greeted us, all Latin politeness and profusion. They were honored, he said, to have us. We were North Americans, no? "An American has never come before. You would of course like to look around? I shall see that you learn all about maté."

His hospitality was very kind indeed, we assured him, but we hoped to impose upon the Company only long enough to go down to Guayra, on the Paraná. As this was entirely Matté-Larangeira property. . . .

"*Espere, senhores.* All that can be arranged in due time. This afternoon you shall see the ranch."

And that was how we met the Captain's daughter, whom we afterwards named the Infanta. She and the Lieutenant, we might call him, came for us in a car. The Lieutenant informed us that the Infanta spoke English.

"Well, a little," she laughed. "I was in school in Switzerland. If you understand French, I may have to explain sometimes that way. All these technical terms, you know." Perhaps she was just one of the black-eyed, dark-haired and beautiful *senhoritas* you read about. Already growing a little plump, perhaps, as so many women do in these countries, even though she certainly was not over eighteen. Yet she showed herself to have a very definite personality. We had hardly started towards the ranch before we knew she was very used to the company of men only. A little tardily, we wished we had changed into our clean clothes, such as they were.

But at the moment she was proudly telling us about what "we" do, how this tremendous Company was largely owned by her father and her uncles, how many thousands of sacks of maté they shipped down the river to Buenos Aires; for Argentina is still, despite tariffs, Brazil's best customer for maté. The ranch to which we were going was typical of the fifteen they had, spread over an area which occupies whole sections of two states. The ranches were the points for gathering the leaves that are stripped from the trees.

The first building we came to was a long, open affair. From a distance we could hear the crackling of the leaves as they dried over the fire, and catch the fragrant smell. Great bunches of the leaves were brought in on small railroad cars and placed in wire sieves beneath which was a pit with a hot fire. As the sieves slowly turned the leaves dried in this first process. Then they went to the *barbacuá,* which has nothing to do with barbecue but is the Guaraní name for "hole," again to be roasted.

The Infanta stood before this building, her arms akimbo, laughing at the Indians who were pitching the leaves up into a kind of hay-rack arrangement above another fire, and constantly turning and stirring them. As the men worked they uttered the most curious cries ever heard outside of a jungle. Something like a Tarzan yell. Not words, and with no mean-

ing at all. No wonder the Infanta laughed, although she might have yelled, too, if she had been above that hot furnace. The men work in twelve-hour shifts, and no doubt they would go crazy with the heat and the monotony if they had no emotional outlet.

"Are you really interested?" She turned upon us suddenly.

We might have asked how she happened to be interested herself. Not many debutantes of the States, with exactly the same schooling, would take such pride in papa's business. But this was an institution, perhaps that explained it; and what else was a young girl to do, confined to the Matto Grosso?

It was not that she had merely been told to show the visitors about; plainly, by the way she talked to the men, she was often here. We began to ask serious questions about this anomaly in the wild landscape. The mill, she said, was the last step. Here the dried and roasted leaves were ground — not too fine, for Argentina has a heavy duty on the finished product — then packed in bags and sent to the Company's own mills in the other republic. The whole thing was a comparatively simple process; but what about the cutting, who did that and where?

Oh, the *mineiros*. We were put into the car again and driven out another road through fields thick with the maté. In Brazil it need never be cultivated, for through all this section it grows wild. Some of the trees were quite shorn of leaves and top branches (they never seem to grow over twelve feet high). Because there are so many trees the leaves are cut only every other year. During the heavy rains of October, November and December they cannot cut, but the rest of the year the Guaraní Indians bring their heavy loads to the ranches and are paid by poundage. Some of them make surprisingly good wages.

"People are always saying we treat these *mineiros* badly," the Infanta said. "Really, they are very well off. It would

be hard for them to find other work which would pay them as much."

We had to admit the cowboys on the *fazenda* could not make half as much as some of the hardest workers here.

At a little improvised camp we stopped. Possibly a dozen or more large families were living in these grass huts, thrown up for temporary use while the men were working this particular sector. At the ranch, if a man was a bachelor, he was given his food free; such a rule could be applied here without costing the Company an extra cent.

Back in the wood a few men were still cutting, their feet planted in the low crotches of the trees, snipping the ends of the limbs expertly in such a way as not to kill the plant. The leaves were stripped on the spot, and carried on the backs of the men to the camp, where a truck gathered them. "But this is nothing," the Infanta said. "We must come out here very early in the morning to see the real work. You don't mind getting up at seven?"

We mentioned a few mornings at the *fazenda*. "Very well, then. Now" — she spoke to the Lieutenant — "I want to show them the horses."

As we drove back we passed one of the *mineiros*. We must see his costume; this was the real Indian, with *chiripá* and all. Though we told her we had seen the outfit she insisted the Lieutenant call the man over. They made no pretense of speaking to him, merely indicated that he should stand off for inspection. We felt for the poor fellow.

Yet these people hardly seemed to resent her autocratic bearing: aristocratic, rather. For as we came back from the special pool where the Infanta said she swam with the horses, past the cotton field which she dismissed as a new hobby of the Captain's, an Indian came up to the car. He had something for her. Opening his hands he showed a tiny, furry animal, something like a rock rabbit. The gesture of a slave to his mistress, perhaps, but she could not have been more pleased over a trip to Europe. . . .

"I like especially to swim and ride," she told us as we came into town again and drove towards the stables, "and to dance, too, but we have so few dances any more."

"You like staying here?"

"Oh, yes! For a while. I think I shall go to the United States soon to see some of my friends."

We had come to the stables. One beautiful bay horse was just coming in from being exercised. It was famous all over the Matto Grosso, we heard. After the small Brazilian breeds, it was curious how tall and graceful these horses appeared to us — most of them English full-breds, their coats sleek and glistening, their heads so very haughty and intelligent. "I am learning to jump," the Infanta told us. "Sometimes I am afraid, but I can't let Papa know that; he would be frightfully angry. This is his great love. You don't play polo? Papa likes to, but there are not enough men."

"You certainly seem to lead a very fine life out here."

"There is enough to do. Tonight you must come and play tennis. Did you bring rackets? No? Why not? Well, you must play. After dinner, then?" And she left us with the Lieutenant.

Twenty-four hours before, you could not have told us we would have encountered all this. Perhaps the horses suggested it, but there was something curiously British about the Captain's life and this town. The houses were so neat, there was so much order and efficiency — this, stated as a fact rather than as derogatory towards Brazil. For there is something good about a little sloppiness and a more haphazard existence; you won't enjoy travel in the Latin Americas if you think otherwise. But here: it was a kind of keep-up-the-morale, white-tie-at-dinner-in-the-jungle feeling. Or simply the Englishman's instinct to clear a place for his polo field and look around later for a house site. Not at all bad, simply surprising here. Perhaps till now we just hadn't met the right people.

Even though the Infanta didn't keep her dates with us. . . .

Three nights later we sat watching the Captain, in a sun helmet, playing croquet with a few select persons. The brilliant floodlights illuminated a marvelously rolled and sanded court; at its outer edges were stationed innumerable ball boys. On the other side of the netting people were playing tennis on a cement court.

The first night we had joined them, despite the Infanta's absence, but now we sat on the sidelines with a big Norwegian we had met at the movies the night before. He had just come in from his land, which he leased from the Matté-Larangeira. Behind us we could hear familiar English words — play, out, love, sorry, game and begin.

"They're damned fond of their English," the Norwegian growled.

Those words were all that they knew. Half a dozen of the office men and their wives had formed this club, again on the British formula, and gathered here every night in blazers and flannels and berets. Instead of smiling at our poor attempts at Portuguese, they had all profusely apologized because they could speak no more English.

Probably the Captain tolerated the tennis because his beautiful young wife — who ran circles around her daughter, the Infanta, in that respect — liked to play. For the Captain's game was, emphatically, croquet. He was included in the two pairs who were now playing the final of the monthly championship and at the moment were disputing violently with the pompous referee over a technicality.

The Norwegian watched with obvious scorn. "These Brazilians are poor sports," he commented. "Games aren't their specialty, and they're not suited to them. But they think they have to take up everything that's foreign."

"You'll admit they've made a pleasant place out of this wilderness."

"Pleasant for themselves, I suppose. A foreigner can't enjoy himself unless he understands their attitude towards

games. They take them so very seriously. And then, when it comes to something we're pretty earnest about, they're just the opposite. Like their fancy promises that don't materialize. Now, the three of us are all northerners. If we promise to be somewhere at a certain time, we're going to be there. Not these people! "

We laughed. " That's just what we've been puzzling over for the last three days. We thought perhaps we were social outcasts." And we told him how the Captain had greeted us, and the Infanta had shown us around, asking us to come play tennis and promising to take us out again the next morning. " When we came into Campanario we expected nothing at all. But it did seem a little strange, after that first effusive afternoon, that they should barely speak to us the next day, let alone show us around."

The Norwegian crossed one big leg over the other. " They haven't meant to spurn you," he said. " It's simply their way. Talk big, do little. They do the same to one another, only they're used to it. Everything on the spur of the moment when they have a lot of enthusiasm. Like that thing this afternoon."

" That thing " had been a curious demonstration. On the outskirts of town was a new shrine which the Infanta had pointed out to us that first afternoon, remarking that her father was not at all in favor of religion and merely tolerated Our Lady of Campanario. In view of this fact, we had been surprised to find that today the whole town was given a half-holiday. About three o'clock everyone, in Sunday best, had trooped out to the dedication. There was the Captain on a platform before the shrine, arranging the people in groups, directing two men who were taking newsreel movies of the proceedings. Everyone must stand in a position to give the impression of a great gathering; at a signal all the men must kneel, and all through the priest's intonations the Captain's sharp voice barked orders, oblivious of the ceremony.

"But that performance on the Captain's part was probably not so much sudden enthusiasm as tact," we said to the Norwegian.

"I've seen him insult a man one day, and the next go out of his way to help him."

"Just a matter of blowing hot and cold?"

"Exactly. I don't say positively that was the reason for the Captain's allowing the show this afternoon. But take the worst vice of all Brazilians — women. Even a steadier race may have mistresses, but as a general rule, they don't chase one after another all the time. You ask anybody about that." He rose and gave one last look at the croquet court, which was now the scene of a very heated argument. "Let's go have a drink," he suggested. "They don't let you buy liquor in these Company towns, but I've brought in some aged *cachaça*. . . . Why don't you fellows come out to my place for a while? We could do some riding and sit and talk over a bottle in the evenings."

"Nothing we'd like better, but the maté barges are going down the river tomorrow. And if we don't catch them we'll be stranded here at their mercy for another three weeks or so."

"That would never do. Well, let's go indulge in a little of the Anglo-Saxon vice now. This liquor isn't bad, I have to get it out in the country. . . ."

At last, today we are going down to the brown river. To Porto Felicidade on the Amambahy River, a tributary of the great Paraná. All day the maté trucks pass our door, and at five we are taken with the last one, which is also carrying the mail. We do not realize what this will mean for us. . . .

The truck is late, and we race down the road towards the harbor through thick foliage which is a bright, staring green in the yellow light. It is not far, only fifty miles below Campanario. Only a matter of a couple of hours — but not when a tire blows.

We wonder why the driver swears so vehemently, until he announces that he has no spare tube or even patching equipment. Where is this Company efficiency we have been talking about?

Fortunately there is a telephone line, and one of the men is sent ahead to the nearest house to call for another car to bring out a tube. As the sun sets red and purple above the wedge of trees behind us, we walk up and down the road. The wood is heavy with fragrant smells, of canella, *mamão* and the native honeysuckle. In the thicket night sounds are beginning to assert themselves — among them the incessant whine of mosquitoes about our ears. The driver and the remaining passenger say they are going over to a shack in the wood. We overhear them mention something about food.

And we are left in the growing darkness to guard the truck, supperless. We sit in the cab, slapping mosquitoes and watching the moon rise. It is two hours before a car comes out with the necessary tube — and then there is no one to change it. *Wait, wait:* we laugh — that is all we have been doing since eight o'clock this morning when they "thought" a truck might take us.

By the time the men come back and the process is completed (infinitely complicated for these people; they approach it as if they had never done such a thing before), it is ten o'clock. The moon, which has been hidden above the clouds, breaks through and shines down on us. The driver

roars along now, the cool wet air feels particularly cold. . . . Then the improbable, almost the impossible, happens. We blow another tube. And this time we are far away from a telephone.

Although they talk and argue for half an hour there is only one solution, which they finally accept: to take off the offending tire and drive on the rim. At the next house, rouse a man from his sleep and get a tube from another truck. . . . Fifty miles, mostly through the darkness, hemmed in by a wilderness of brush, making us feel we are plunging towards the end of the world.

The manager of the port meets us, his lantern picking out the scarlet of the blanket he wears over his shoulders. Where the devil have we been? We were expected at seven and here it is three o'clock in the morning. If we hadn't been carrying the mail, the barges would have left long ago. . . .

Moonlight falls on the heavy dew which silvers the tin roof of the warehouse, the tall grass along the cliff. And below, the barges and the launch which tows them.

Weird forms in the half-light as a dozen almost naked men climb the hill and shoulder the sacks, directed by a man in a sun helmet. They begin to add the sacks to the already overloaded barges, great wide scows sitting low in the brown water. Below there is one lantern: one barge is swarming with people, men and women and children. Wakened by the noise, they come crawling out of a kind of cavern made in the sacks. Very close on the other side rise the black shadows of the jungle bank.

It is hard to say what elements give us the special feeling, set the tone. The moving forms, glistening bronze in the moonlight, the throbbing of the launch motor which echoes from the tangle. The feeling of being enclosed: the mystery the jungle always has by night. The men, including the overseers, talking in an unknown, staccato language. And especially the bustle, the sense of imminent departure: a

kind of secretiveness, as if we are privy to some conspiracy. An unrelated, perhaps irrelevant, emotion, though thoroughly in keeping with this scene.

Aboard the little launch everything is wet from the dew. It is the dampness rather than the cold which makes us shiver. Alongside is a dugout canoe where a man has started a fire and is cooking a late snack for the workers — but not for us. The men have finished loading, the tarpaulins are put back in place, and they shove off, bending their whole weight against long bamboo poles. We turn about in the narrow river, heading downstream. The canvas cots in the tiny cabin feel like eiderdown. . . .

The sun wakes us early in the morning. Already it is oppressively warm. Behind us the three barges switch back and forth like the tail of a kite; for we are rounding curves every minute now, the last barge, partly guided by a tremendous oar used as a rudder, scraping the sides of the bank. Sprawled on the near barge are the people we saw last night, among an odd assortment of furniture and boxes, parrots in cages, and dogs. Women are nursing their babies, a few men are playing cards under a kind of tent arrangement made by the tarpaulin stretched over one of the bamboo poles. On the end of this ridgepole hangs a great side of red meat; a man is chopping up a piece of it with an axe. Hungrily we ask the cook if we may have some of the steak for our breakfast. It will be the first meal in nearly twenty-four hours.

On both sides the banks continue to enclose us, their trees often trailing in the water. A little later we come to a settlement: a huge mud house perched on the high bank, outlined against the blue sky. There is a chute down to the river for the maté sacks. A few of the men are carrying gasoline tins up the steep embankment. The man who lives here comes down to the boat: a big fellow in pyjama coat and panama hat; except for his costume he might be any prosperous business man — and here he is, living in the midst of the jungle.

And now we become the sole occupants of a houseboat

which they are taking downstream: a long boat with quite excellent rooms — again the touch of civilization, the Captain's special pride. It is lashed to the side of the smaller launch, and we luxuriate in deck chairs under the deck awning, while the family with two rather attractive girls take over our quarters on the *Dom Pedro.*

There is an air of negligé about the people's actions and their dress. The Captain and the man with the sun helmet wear slippers on their bare feet, everyone sprawls lazily in the shade, which turns to dazzling sunlight each time we round a curve. A tree-limb trails in the brown-green water, breaking the smoothness and starting a shimmer which tells which way the current flows. Always the heavy foliage: white tree trunks draped with moss, vines dangling. And leaves: pointed, round, curled or cupped, heart-shaped or polygonal — dark green, shiny green as if lacquered, olive- or yellow-green or silver — or merely clusters, globes and feathery masses which present one solid color to the eye. Always a few palms, waving their dry thin leaves above the rest. Except for small eddies and whirlpools the water is quite still, yet the reflections are always ragged, giving a sense of depth to this brown river winding through the brush. In the sun now it is deathly hot.

And the butterflies: a few of iridescent blue for which Brazil is famous, but many more of common orange and yellow variety, in perfect swarms about the bow of the boat. And a blue bird; we can never draw close enough to define it. Ahead of us a flock of *tucanos* cross the river and alight squawking in the trees, their ridiculous red and yellow beaks overbalancing their black bodies. As the sun grows higher the reflection on the water grows less dazzling, and a welcome breeze comes up.

But below in the cabin at lunchtime even the fan helps little. The four of us, the man with the sun helmet, the boat's Captain and ourselves, sit in our shirt sleeves and are waited on by a man in a white coat: the perfect Spanish ver-

sion of the cockney movie actor, Herbert Mundy. An easy tropical life, it seems, yet there is always a concealed struggle against a very dominating nature. . . .

In the cooler afternoon we come on deck and watch with the sun-helmet man for an alligator to appear along the bank, a Mauser rifle loaded for just such easy targets. There is a sameness about the foliage lining the shore, and yet an endless variety of detail. From below-decks it seems that we are plowing through the greenness, for the water is not visible.

Towards supper time we reach a warehouse, the first sign of habitation since this morning. Until late the men carry aboard the fat, awkward sacks of maté across a plank from the shore. Yet they hoist them like feathers: two men take the four corners, throw the bag up, and one of them catches it lightly on his shoulder, the long side rising in the air, his hand grasping one corner. All of them are bare-footed and naked to the waist, with perhaps the end of a sack on their heads, like a peaked cap. When it grows dark the searchlight picks out the way, outlining them against the black water. Beyond, one green tree catches the beams. The light somehow brings out certain colors: the green and yellow stripes on the burlap sacks, a red poncho on the barge, the blue dress of a woman. There is only the regular sound of their feet on the plank, heavy under their weight, and the whacking of the paddle which they wield to line the sacks on the barge.

At last the second barge has its full load of five hundred sacks. The motor starts up, the searchlight sweeps ahead to the curves, to each side and, as the boats round a bend, glances back to see that the snake-dance of barges has not switched too far; often the men must fend off the shore with their long poles. . . .

And on the second morning we come on deck to see the wide stretches of the Rio Paraná in the pink and misty dawn. We have been awakened by the unloading at another port;

the screaming of water birds, now the motor is shut off, incongruously merging with that of a rooster on the land. On deck everything is wet: a part of Brazil and its tropics is the heavy dew which comes at night. Scattered about are branches and leaves scraped from the banks.

All the second day down the Paraná, which here is two and a half miles wide. With only a blur of green on each far bank, or an island, it is like the lower Mississippi: an impression which is increased as we pass a paddle-wheeler, going upriver to Itapura, near the point we crossed on the train going to Campo Grande. It has been down only as far as Guayra, the Company's port to which we are heading; there the great Seven Falls divide the river which extends from the tropical mountains in the north down to Buenos Aires.

Now definitely we have left the wide red plains. For many miles our course will follow the great brown river. . . .

The sound of *Sete Quedas,* the Seven Falls, dominates Guayra. Just below the little port the wide, lazy Paraná suddenly is squeezed through a gorge and roars down as if in revolt against this confinement. It is like a great wind rushing through the trees at the September equinox, or like the fluctuating rumble of a long freight train passing through the night; we pass behind the warehouses by the dock and the sound is cut off. But in the daytime the sounds have no meaning; they face the competition of day noises and are but part of our impressions, like the bass section of an orchestra, while the buzzing of the sawmill, the hollow tap of hammers caulking boats at drydock, the clanking of the machine shops, play the overtones. At night, however, the insistent sound of water dominates the stars, forcing itself into our consciousness, soothing the little town in the darkness. . . .

A grey-haired Scotchman who was head of the forestry division took us out one day on horseback through the tropical woods, where the men cut fuel for wood boilers. The workers who haul this wood receive the highest wages of any company workers, and it was here men were sent in the old days who had store debts to work off. "It used to be virtual slavery," the Scotchman told us in his clipped brogue. "A man could run up whativer debts he wanted; and of course they charged him double the proper price. That way he was niver free to leave the Company."

Like most of the men we had met in the Matto Grosso, our guide had come from Europe to this new land of opportunity; the outdoor life filled him with satisfaction. Although it was hard to educate the children. Now he must pull up stakes and find a job closer to a city like São Paulo, where there were schools beyond the grammar stage. Always, between these northern men and this Latin country there was a conflict, sometimes a natural outcry against living in a foreign country, sometimes only half-meant in scornful fashion, as you might criticize someone you know very well;

most of all a disagreement on both sides as to the way of life and its meaning. The Scotchman was no exception.

We had arranged to meet him the next night in the recreation hall, which also served as a dining room for the small hotel. A three-piece orchestra consisting of guitar, violin and accordion had already begun to play for the weekly dance, which had something of the grange-meeting quality to it; it was Paraguayan Independence Day as well. We sat at one of the tables and had a beer. A few men from the office had already gathered, but no women: "They always hate to be the first to arrive or the last to leave," our Scotch friend explained. And he went on to repeat, in a more Presbyterian tone, what the Norwegian had said: that these people were immoral, as he called it. Single women were not allowed to land on the Company's property unless accompanied by a man. These women "companions" often went the rounds, and there was sometimes shooting. This state of affairs shocked the Scotchman, who had perhaps forgotten that such spectacular elements seem to burn brightest in the most law-abiding communities throughout the world. But here there was a difference; the attitude struck us as being sensible in its open acceptance of the inevitable: when the Scotchman was married in the Argentine he received a folder to fill out. There were, he said, three pages on which to record illegitimate children.

The girls had begun to arrive and the dancing began. There were the two pretty daughters of the new Chief of Police, who looked like Caspar Milquetoast; the young man from Rio who for some reason of his own had preferred to bury himself here; and the laziest worker in the Company, who was also the best tango dancer. After seeing so many people attempt this dance in the States, it was a relief to see it done gracefully and effortlessly by almost every dancer here. The *ranchero,* to the tune of *Santa Fé,* they did not do so well; it was like a group of city people self-consciously at-

tempting the Virginia Reel. A big Paraguayan tried to lead them, clapping his hands and stamping his feet to the time of this Indian square dance. He had seen it done in the camps, and through him we had an inkling of the exciting dance it could be. Later they all elected to have a cut-in number, but instead of tapping on the shoulder, the single men dropped a board or some heavy object behind the couple, took the girl, and the other man picked up the board and went after a new partner.

The three of us went out into the night and walked along the brick sidewalks towards the fruit farm the Company runs just outside of town. The Scotchman was telling us about the duty the Argentine had put upon Brazilian maté four years ago to foster their own plantations. The Company's profits had slumped. "They don't even keep an expert for their private railway now," he snorted. "I have to go down every few weeks to try and show 'em how to put a steam engine back together. But they're doing better now. They've got a new bee in their bonnet," he went on. "Last year I planted fifty *hectares* of cotton for 'em. They think they will make their fortune off it. That big Austrian you saw at the dance has come down here to show 'em how. Everybody'll forget coffee and maté, until they'll have so much cotton they'll have to throw it away. But the Captain and his brother aren't putting up the wild parties they used to. I've seen 'em bring in that houseboat full of guests. Now the Captain's left to his croquet and his horses. Croquet! That's no man's game!" He sniffed; he was a tennis player, and even at fifty was the best player in town.

The roar of the *Sete Quedas* seemed to grow more insistent as we turned back toward Guayra — a town designed by an American architect, the Scotchman said, "the best mon they iver had here." The dance was over, and we walked down the silent tree-lined street watching the leafy patterns that a street lamp threw across the grass and cast upon a white picket fence. This, and the dry leaves falling, and the scattered

lights in gabled cottages, and the tinkling of a radio. We will remember them, as we will remember four men gathered in the lamplight at one corner, whispering as though afraid they might disturb the stillness of the town or interrupt the distant roaring of the Seven Falls. . . .

The little toy train with its turnip smoke stack puffed as if it were out of breath. We were going on again, and the Company's privately-owned railroad was taking us the first stage to Porto Mendez, on the other side of the Falls at Guayra. The train was averaging exactly six miles an hour, for at every grade it had to pause to get up steam; then rocketed down and around a curve while we hung on and hoped.

At Porto Mendez it was hardly the same Paraná we saw two hundred feet below us. A river as broad as the Mississippi had narrowed, boiling and swirling, into a deep-cut gorge not a hundred yards wide. The little river steamer below looked like a toy. Down the steep embankment ran a cable car at a sixty-degree angle: we and the maté sacks were lowered to the water's edge. And we realized that for the first time we were stepping into Argentina as we noticed that the boat flew the blue and white flag.

Down in this v-shaped cut we waited all the hot afternoon

while the cable cars brought down maté, the men hoisting the sacks on their shoulders and crossing the plank to stow them in the hold. A man joined us at the rail. "What a devil of a lot of transferring they have to go through," he remarked in an English accent. We fell to talking about maté. His name was Robins, manager of a plantation — no longer called a *fazenda*, but a *finca* — down the river on the Paraguayan side: for at Guayra that country takes over the west bank of the Paraná.

He had met the steamer on its way up, having to row across to the Brazilian side, as these boats are not allowed to dock in Paraguay. "You won't see our place till tomorrow morning," he said, "because the fog settles down in the canyon at this time of year, and we shall have to cast anchor: the river's too dangerous — too many shoals and whirlpools." He was the most articulate and informed person we had met since we left Don Carlos; his talk prepared us for this change of scene. "Curious, you know, the terrain in Paraguay. Other rivers run along parallel to this. I've stood on a ridge and seen them not two hundred yards apart. Then they do an abrupt turn and flow into this one, over a waterfall." We could see the heavy foliage on the other side, the enormous ferns and the graceful clumps of bamboo, like sprays of flowers. The river was quite low now, they had told us at Guayra. Half-way up the cliff we saw the names of ships, painted during the flood season.

We had the feeling that we were already in a different country. It was a definite relief to hear Spanish again after Portuguese. And actually, although Brazil keeps to the Paraná as far down as Iguassú Falls, this was the parting of the ways: beyond this point it was too difficult for easy communication and shipment of merchandise. No longer was it Rio or São Paulo that everyone looked to; now it was "B. A." Robins was bound there, on his way to England with his wife for a holiday.

As we sat down to the dinner table, with its decanters of

red wine, he told us more. He had been here twenty-five years and knew this river all the way. "We are coming to El Dorado, where they take on oranges," he would say without looking out the porthole. Or — "There's a chute ahead, all that's left of one plantation. . . . This country gets a hold on you," he admitted. "You may hate the bloody place, or think you do, but you come back to it every time. You're a misfit in your own country, your friends are gone, it's all too confining. But does anyone know about the Paraná? I daresay it has a navigable length as long as the most famous rivers, barring our own Amazon, and the Mississippi. You're quite right to come this way, especially to see Iguassú."

We explained that we had been in the Matto Grosso and had the alternative of going west from Campo Grande to the River Paraguay, and thence down the other side of that country. Either way we would eventually arrive at the same town — Corrientes, just below where the two rivers join.

"You did right," Robins assured us. "More interesting here. And the missions territory. Below in Argentina. Be sure to stop and see San Ignacio, right near Posadas where you change boats. Know anything about it? Regular Jesuit state, practically speaking, until they were expelled. Government thought them too powerful. Yes, you'll want to see the ruins of the mission."

And the next morning, when we came in to the sand beach which served as a dock at Foz do Iguassú, we said good-bye to Robins and his wife, but only till Posadas, where we would all take the same boat again.

IGUASSÚ

If the town of Foz do Iguassú has ever seen a traveler before, it does not betray the fact. A mule cart takes us up to this sprawling village set on the edge of Brazil, and there we hire a man to take us to the Falls. Oh yes, there is a hotel, he assures us.

His antique touring car will deliver us. Of course, he explains as we start off, he is really not a chauffeur at all — just a big landowner who likes to drive back and forth — for money. Once he drove this wreck across the jungle all the way north to São Paulo. Perhaps he actually did: it looks it.

This is no road at all, we discover, but two ruts sneaking through the giant grass which flashes in and out of the back seat, slapping our faces and leaving us with piles of seed. Even the driver is not immune: there is no glass in the windshield and the long stems try to sweep off the ridiculous fur-trimmed cap he wears, a relic older than the car.

Half-way out we meet an ancient buggy drawn by an ancient horse, and our driver hails it. One of the occupants,

a short and stout old fellow with a molding sun helmet, gets quite excited when he sees us and immediately deserts his old buggy for our car. From the mixture of languages which he fires at us, we gather that he is an Austrian, and the proprietor of the hotel at the Falls. With only one guest, he felt safe leaving his wife to tend to everything — but with three! He must go back to help.

Finally the grass, which the driver proudly remarks is part of his property, clears away, and we come into the national forest preserve. The trail becomes a road; we are almost there as we come upon thick-growing bamboo which arches overhead to close out the sky. This strange ride to one of the wonders of the world: somehow it adds to our feeling of excitement. We have come so far, all the many days down to the brown river, to see this. Then around a curve and the whole tremendous panorama spreads out before us.

Iguassú is Guaraní for "Great Waters." But with these great waters, such a setting! Somewhere, perhaps, water drops slightly farther or flows in greater volume, but that is all. We are on a level with the far side, where the Iguassú, this large tributary of the Paraná, flows quietly through the jungle to the brink, playing in white streamers over the frontage of the Falls, boiling through a narrow gorge far below. From our vantage point we can see how the river, at first flowing parallel to the road down which we have come, slowly turns, spilling water over a ninety-degree arc, so that it is impossible to see all the Falls at once.

So that Iguassú may be viewed from a dozen vantage points. First, this great panorama from the Brazilian side, clouds of mist rising above the jungle to the left where the Falls are hidden. Across from us is Argentina, and there the largest single fall, San Martín, and nearer, dropping from a lower level but still far above the gorge, the *Tres Mosqueteros,* the Three Musketeers, three ribbons like Yosemite dropping over the black rock.

White water, green jungle, blue-grey sky and the black

rock: colors repeated when a young boy takes us back along a path that leads to the *Garganta do Diablo*, the Devil's Gorge — this name in Portuguese, for it is in Brazilian territory. It is the largest of them all, itself alone making Niagara seem puny. Niagara, which does not have the palms and orchids and great looping snake-like vines weaving in and out of the trail, framing, through a break in the dense foliage, a picture of some smaller falls.

We slip down over the damp, rich earth and stand at the foot of the Floriano Peixoto cascade: a name reminiscent of a busy street in Rio. Here the water tumbles instead of falls into the gorge below us. The roar drowns out all other sound; the white edge of the water as it breaks over from the river above is vibrant against the leaden color of the storm-sky.

Later, we climb down a long, precarious ladder, watching out for snakes, and at the bottom leap from rock to rock along the rapids whose spray blows up to soak us. Flocks of little swallows dart in and out of the falls above, fearless of being carried down, doing it for the sheer amusement. Then, as we climb higher again, we pause at the very brink, and watch the unsuspecting water flow quietly to the edge, then for a fraction of a second draw out tight, trying to pit inertia against gravity, only to plunge over in a great white cascade. The little boy who is with us never seems to tire of all this; he sits here quietly, staring in fascination at the water. The infinite variety of Iguassú could never cloy. . . .

The other guest at the hotel, a young German, joins us, and we walk back to it, where it stands overlooking the great panorama we first saw. Surely the world's worst hotel in the finest of settings.

"It was abandoned, you see," the German tells us. "The revolution of 'twenty-four was fought here when it was only partially built. They've never finished. Only a month ago this Austrian couple came out from town, but I think they are already planning to leave."

We cannot blame them: this great unpainted frame building with its three storeys of glassless windows, its belfries, its ornamented eaves, looks like the wooden imitation of some feudal castle, or the setting for a Boris Karloff movie. There is one room inside with a roof; only a few incongruous sticks of furniture inhabit it, furthering the look of abandonment. Yet from here is a superb view of the Falls.

Out of several broken-down nests which the Austrian has nailed to the wall peer stuffed birds, as if hoping to be out of here. Tourists have scribbled and carved their names on the rough board walls, and there is an old gun and two yellowed maps. At night it is like living in a barn, a very ghostly barn, for we can look up between the floor beams to the dormers of the leaky roof. A bat flits in casually through one of the windows, and dives low over the single gas lamp, casting a huge shadow on the wall. A moment later some sort of wasp drops neatly down upon the German's hand; he jumps as if he were shot. Thoughtfully he rubs *caña* on the bite, and we go on talking, huddled around the single table like conspirators. Talking of "snooks," as he pronounces snakes, and of the way the government has allowed this place to run down.

"It is like so much they do — or do not do — here in Brazil," he says. "They let the Argentines over on the other side take all the business" — we had noticed the hotel there — "and here they sit, with the best location! Of course, they are planning a new hotel now."

"But," the little Austrian proprietor puts in, "you cannot run a place here, the way things are. I have to buy rice for eight *milreis* from the hotel on the other side. If I could get it from Brazil, it would cost only one *milreis*."

"Yes," said the German, "we are always bothered with high prices. Often the Brazilians have ruined their world markets by fixing prices, too."

That is evidently the common plaint, we have heard it so many times from so many different mouths. Even back in Rio, we had heard the first intimations: that Brazil seemed to

lack foresight, that she failed to plan for her future. "Whose fault is it?" we wonder aloud.

"The government's!" the Austrian exclaims, and the German nods agreement.

"I frankly do not understand them," he goes on. "They will not give us schools so our children can learn Portuguese — they have no pride. We Germans, when we settle here, feel that this is our country. We want our children to speak the language, even if we ourselves do not often intermarry with the natives."

We smile at his last statement. For it is just this fact which seems to be disorganizing Brazil — her tremendous number of unassimilated foreigners. Not yet thinking of themselves as part of Brazil, so that in hearing these modern Canterbury tales from such an assortment of men, we have felt that each one still keeps his own national traits. It is a situation not unfamiliar to citizens of the United States, and the German is eager to discover what our country has done. He is astounded when we talk of miscegenation between the Negro and the whites.

"I did not believe such a thing happened in a civilized country!" he expostulates. "In Brazil, yes. Particularly you see it in the north — at Bahia, where you say you have been. One time up there I met a Negro who addressed me in German. 'You can't be a German!' I said. 'Oh,' he answered, 'when you have been in Brazil as long as I have, you'll be sunburned, too.'"

His feeling for racial purity is ruffled, and we are relieved when the good wife of the proprietor comes in with a pitcher of orangeade, made from the fruit on the trees outside our window. As an obedient *Hausfrau,* she has not entered into this discussion, but it is plain to see from her weary eyes that she would like to be back in that little Austrian village again.

But will she ever return to it? Very probably not; and she realizes that fact. Essentially, she is no different from all the foreigners who have taken up residence in Brazil. Nearly

everyone we have talked to has replied a little cynically. Their criticisms seem always to be founded on emotional reactions to a country which holds them in voluntary exile. Unconsciously or not, they rebel against a Brazil which is as yet unorganized. The American business men we have talked to in Rio, rosily optimistic as they are, have uttered dark cynicisms against the politicians, no less bitter than the men of the interior. There has been Don Carlos, with his rancher's contempt for all that centers in a city that looks eastward to Europe rather than into the continent; Don Georges, who resents the old phrase, "the people's temperamental incapacity for self-government"—and yet hopes for a dictator; the Norwegian, who finds a croquet game the example of the Brazilian's fickle, changeable nature; the Scotchman, who sees only immorality and a lack of foresight. . . .

Foreigners they all are, yet they are a part of a new country. With Portuguese the language, as English is the language of the United States—and often with as little reason.

Suddenly we all laugh as Bowman flicks a cigarette towards the windows and hits the only piece of glass still remaining. That action recalls us to the present scene and to the more particular subject of this corner of Brazil.

"You have been to Guayra," the German says, "and you know how the falls there cut off this part from the rest of the country. Actually, you will be on Brazilian territory until you leave this hotel and take the boat down the river. But have you felt that this corner belongs to Brazil, or to anyone? Not that I would like to see this region developed! The Argentines think of your Niagara, of course, and that is why they have fought so long over the dividing line of the Falls. Actually, the *Thalweg* is in the middle of the Devil's Gorge."

"And what is a *Thalweg?*"

It is a German word, we find, meaning the line which divides the water volume of a river evenly into two. "That is to say," the German explains, "in spite of all this expanse

we see from the windows here, the large percentage of the water flows over the Devil's Gorge, because at that point the river runs straight west. When the rest of the water sweeps around in a circle and comes over the Falls in nearly the opposite direction, most of the force is gone. The Brazilians think the Falls should be divided according to the linear expanse; that is, literally in the middle. But that would give the Argentines very little of the total volume of water, you see."

We wince to think that some day Iguassú might see a power plant, might lose its setting. A setting and a great waterfall seen by so few. Only the other afternoon we saw some tourists from the Argentine side, when a cloud of citronella suddenly evaporated revealing two Germans, two Argentines and two Americans.

Yet there are not many who have pilgrimaged to Iguassú. Seldom appreciated, least of all by a Brazilian government which is more concerned with its present revenue from the coastal country, with its oranges, cotton and coffee. Iguassú is better off unspoiled. That is our thought this morning, watching the spots of sunlight move across the great panorama, warming the green jungle, transforming the water into falling crystal. . . .

SAN IGNACIO

A JESUIT STATE

February 27th, 1767

To the Count of Aranda
Viceroy of Buenos Aires
. . . Taking into consideration the most grave reasons relative to the obligation which we find placed in our hands to maintain subordination, peace, and justice among our people; and in consideration of other just and urgent matters; using the supreme authority which the Almighty has given us for the protection of our subjects and respect for our crown: we have determined to order that the Company of Jesus be expelled from all our domains in Spain, the Indies, the Philippines, and neighboring islands; and we further order that all property belonging to the Jesuits be seized. . . . Given under our royal hand in Pardo.

CARLOS III OF SPAIN

So, in 1767, fell San Ignacio, and many another stronghold of the Jesuits in the western world. But what had happened

in the missions country since 1516 when Juan de Solis made his tragic voyage of discovery up the Rio de la Plata into the unknown country of the Guaranis, makes a fine historic sequence. . . .

Ante 1516

In the wild interior north of Buenos Aires, where the Paraguay and Paraná rivers flow southward through the *selva,* the tropical rain forest, lived the Cainguaes and the Guaquies, tribes of the great Tupi-Guaraní race that once filled the continent east of the Andes and south from the Amazon. They were a strange people, mixture of the savage and the civilized, living in widely separated family groups of ten or twenty, building their houses of stick walls lined with mats woven from jungle fibers, or from stalks of *caña,* sugar cane. Living self-sufficiently on the products of the forests and the fields, the men going to the hunt with bows and arrows and a pouchful of implements for fire-making, or raising mandioca, corn and cereals which filled out their diet. At home the women wove cotton *tejidos* which they dyed with colors extracted from the forest herbs; and put the colors, generally black and scarlet, on their faces in geometric patterns.

Certainly a primitive people: the writings of the early *padres* speak of them as cannibals who devoured their enemies in an insulting sort of vengeance. Even today on the Atlantic coast there is an *arroyo* called, quite delightfully, *Caruabape,* which, translated from the Guaraní, means "To eat a little Indian." Yet the fact of cannibalism alone tells little of a people. Too many great races of the past, the Mexicans among them, have practiced it to justify classification of these people as pure savages, particularly when you learn that these same tribes developed a communistic state wholly dependent on the moral dignity of the individual. Writing of this, a modern Spanish author says: "People have said that communism was an institution brought in by the Jesuits and

imposed on the Indians as the best means of using them for certain ends. This is a grave mistake. Communism not only antedated the tribes which inhabited the missions, but it was practiced everywhere by the Guaranis."

In the spring at planting time all the Indians gathered at the house of the oldest tribe member or at the home of their *cacique,* mayor, and made a field for him, plowing and planting it. Later they did the same for each member of the group, and finally sowed a common field, much larger, around which they set up a great stick fence to keep out wild animals. The produce of this common field went to a storehouse, and if any individual needed more food than he obtained from his own field, or if he lost his crop, he took from the storehouse whatever his family required. It is hard to reconcile such a custom with savagery — or to explain how these Indians developed the theory of immortality, or knew the earth was round, or why their study of the forest plants and flowers put them ahead of Europe until the advent of Linnaeus. It is a pattern made of contrasts: of a people whose strangely advanced accomplishments are set against a background of tribal ritual. A people, unlike the Incas, who rejected star-worship to reverence *Tupa,* the God-like deity who could love or punish them according to their actions; and yet a people who believed in all kinds of superstitions — like that of the young men who took a feather *paye,* or amulet, with them when they went courting. A wooer showed his amulet to the girl and then asked her to walk with him through the forest. If he had trouble, he would say: " See, I have the scarlet feather of the Caburey bird, which is a very great charm. If you do not wish to come with me into the forest, horrible sores will break out all over you." Generally, she came.

Such were the people that Juan de Solis might have found in 1516. . . .

1516-1608

He never did. Crossing from Spain, de Solis sailed up the Rio de la Plata, past the site of Buenos Aires, and somewhere on the river disembarked. The Indians slaughtered him. But he roused the Spanish resolve to civilize the vast interior and within a year or two other leaders followed his trail up the rivers, up the Paraguay, to Asunción, where the first center for colonial expansion was founded. A colonization which gradually took in the whole of Paraguay, the south portion of the Matto Grosso, and all the states along the Paraná southeast to Buenos Aires.

A colonization which developed rapidly under the high-sounding banner of religious conversion and good citizenship, but actually under a system of *encomiendas,* or commissions, whereby the various appointed landowners were allowed to demand free work from the Indians in their territory, or even to subjugate them to slavery where they refused. All was not sweetness and light — even the Spaniards soon began to see that. The Indians proved to be good for nothing under this system, and the *encomenderos,* instead of working for the church and crown, thought only of themselves and profits. Things went from bad to worse, and on the sixteenth of March, 1608, the colonial Governor, Saavedra, put an end to the commissions and detailed the Jesuits to convert the heathen.

1608-1767

Skip the next hundred and fifty years. A new scene, with the Jesuits at the height of their power, an organization unlike any other in the world. A group complete within themselves in government, economics and religion. So powerful that the Spaniards fear them more than they feared the Indians, their predecessors — sure of their position, of their

good work with the Indian, of their growing separation from crown and church.

It is a vivid picture that they make — these missions spread through the Paraná country. Picture San Ignacio, founded in 1632. Though it is smaller than many of the missions, still it has two thousand Indians, and in their care some thirty-five thousand head of cattle, four thousand mules and horses, eight thousand sheep and goats. But with this sudden growth there are old problems. The Indian is still subjugated; nominally he works for himself, but in practice he can sell nothing, the Jesuits do it for him. Yet the priests exact only half a day's work and now there is music when they march out to the fields. And there are dances, tournaments and fiestas which add to the color. A color brought into their lives with the first beginnings of the Jesuit empire when the early missionaries came out to found the churches, where all the emphasis was on the pageantry. Winning the Indians as much with material things as with spiritual.

They are clever in other ways, these Jesuits. All the resources of this land have been developed: now, when they load their great fleet of river boats for Buenos Aires, they have yerba maté, cloth, tobacco, sugar, honey, hides and cattle to export. And in return they bring back metal for their church bells, gold and silver cloths to decorate the altars, things for the Indian to marvel at. This has become a great commercial country, organized to the last detail: every Saturday the priests give out a half-pound of cotton to each Indian, two thirds of which must be returned on Wednesday, made into thread. Metal work worthy of Sevilla or Barcelona, painting and sculpture, road building — all these are on the program of development. In the fields the three important foods are raised: corn, mandioca and potatoes. Here are guarded the tremendous herds of cattle which, starting from six cows and a bull imported by two Buenos Aires merchants, have increased to thirty-five thousand head in San Ignacio, to over

three-quarters of a million in the whole missions country. Everything done to a Jesuit end — even if it meant cutting off intertribal communication.

Certainly you cannot deny the Jesuit astuteness — and yet there is no evidence that the Indian was unhappy. The solution of a supervised communism with its amusements and its pomp and ceremony was far better than the system of *encomiendas* which was bound to exist under private landlords. Certainly, the priests believed in their work, believed that it was best for the Indian whose primitive ways of living could no longer stand against the foreigner. They themselves, in spite of their commercial interests, led typically religious lives, devoting hours to all the church functions; and for the Indian, awed by ceremony, they solved the question of conversion cleverly, yet perfectly sincerely.

But the solution of the Jesuits was not likely to satisfy the Spanish world outside, refusing as the priests did to make concessions to church and state. Gradually the opposition coalesced: the business men who hated the Jesuits because they closed to them rich trade routes; the viceroys and other royal officers because they threatened to set up an empire; and the churchmen, jealous of their hold upon the Indian and annoyed at their alleged freedom from the central church. They found two reasons for supporting the opposition: first, the missions were extremely wealthy, and hence there was something to be taken from them; second, because of this great wealth they were said to be plotting independence from the church and Spain.

Yet there is no reason to believe that the missions were supremely rich, and without great riches the Jesuits would never have planned an empire of their own. But little things pointed the other way — the priests made cannons which they claimed were for defense against the savages who still attacked the outposts; the men in Buenos Aires, to whom the Jesuits had often loaned man power to repulse these same savage tribes, saw in the cannons a bid for independence.

Too, there was an abnormally large percentage of French, German, English and Italian priests, and the Spanish rulers were displeased to find that books in Guaraní were being published in the missions without a permit. All of this frightened them, annoyed them, and in the end they drove out the Company of Jesus; later the Pope was to dissolve their order. . . .

1936

This afternoon we are standing in the great central *plaza* of San Ignacio, facing the salmon-colored stone columns which flank the portal of what was once the cathedral. On all four sides the forest presses in, climbing over the lichen-covered rocks which still outline the priests' cells. The lintels lie below the doorways, the roofs have long ago caved in. Any little boy, coming to get the horses which crop the grass in this square courtyard, will point out as evidence of antiquity the giant tree which grows out from one of the old walls.

But the cathedral is still impressive. The carving on the portal is clear in detail; inside, where you can pick oranges which grow up and down the nave, there are beautiful windows with curious gabled lintels, and side entrances of beautiful proportion with a wealth of ornament. Yet it is a sad place, so large and quiet and deserted; there is so little left of all that was, nothing but a multitude of rocks with flowers and bushes sprouting from among them.

Why are there only these bare suggestions, why must we imagine so much: the ceremonial procession across this courtyard when the head priest was carried on a throne into the cathedral, or the scene at evening vespers when the Guaranis came in from the fields? These, and a hundred other pictures. Blame the Spanish greed or fright, or blame the Jesuits who through the centuries have often been expelled —we would like to have seen it as it was. Perhaps we might have, if Carlos had not written to Count Aranda in 1767.

DOWN THE PARANÁ

" Argentina is the devil of a country anyway," Robins was saying as we lolled on the upper deck of the boat. As arranged, we had met him on this new river steamer. Often he complained about conditions in Paraguay, but not in this bitter tone; usually because of the hardships imposed by a primitive kind of life. Yet his next sentence brought in the inevitable contradiction: " This is an interesting part of the river. The wife and I are thinking of getting a houseboat and drifting about among the islands when we come back next autumn."

Now the river had widened as it turned westward at Posadas, the town near the ruins of San Ignacio, resembling once again the expanse of water as we had first seen it, above the Seven Falls. But the boat was following the narrow channel close to the Argentine shore. Along the river's edge ran a narrow strip of lowland perhaps a hundred feet in depth, backed by white, chalky cliffs which rose to our eye level. From there stretched the treeless *pampas* of Argentina, roll-

ing southwards hundreds of miles, in utter contrast to the green jungle on the distant Paraguayan side. Now and again along this narrow fringe of lowland signs of habitation would show through a solitary clump of tropically green trees — queer little outposts, like oases, backed by the limitless expanse of country. Wide river and wide plain: as if the whole world had stretched itself flat. . . .

Robins was enjoying the irresponsibility one always feels aboard a ship. He was just recovering from an attack of malaria, and we were glad to keep him company. But he was cheerfully matter-of-fact about the difficulties of the life at Las Palmas, his plantation. "Only white people in miles," he described it, "with bloody few of the amenities of life. The Indians can roast their steers whole and live on *churrasco* and a bit of *mandioca* and their maté, you know. But we get hungry for vegetables. When they come up from Posadas on one of the Paraguayan boats, they're half rotten. Altogether, it's a devil of a country. All the things which make Brazil unpleasant make Paraguay nearly unbearable, it seems. The ants are so big and numerous you can't grow vegetables — ever been routed out of bed by an army of them marching up a bed post? Well, it's quite a sensation. All the mosquitoes, not just some sorts, give you malaria. The cabbages are six feet tall but you can't eat them. The land's good for nothing but cattle, and then you're lucky if you get one quart a day out of the cows." He laughed at the joke nature seemed to have played. "We had few amusements out there. Our radio brings in England and the States by short wave, however, so we keep up on the news. And we got to be jolly well fond of the three tiger cubs we brought up. Fed them at first with milk from a fountain pen."

We had already heard many stories about the *tigre,* as they call it — the South American jaguar. Robins confirmed some of them. "Oh, they're death to cattle, all right. Our neighbor had seventy-five killed in one night. I've heard of

people raising the cubs till they were full-grown, but you can never trust them. One woman almost succeeded. Then one day her pet killed her. We never had a chance to be placed in that situation because our cubs died." He talked as affectionately about them as if they had been dogs.

The steamer was swinging back and forth across the shallow, widened river that seemed glad to be unconfined by the steep banks of the Upper Paraná. Now it was flowing westward, hot and brown and sluggish, in no hurry to reach the juncture with the River Paraguay which takes it south again to the Atlantic. Only once does it gather pace: at a rapids the Captain reduced speed as we squeezed through a channel, a sailor constantly calling out his soundings at the bow. Up ahead was the *Sol de Argentina* which had struck bottom in these waters; it had turned turtle with all hands on board and had just been raised again. For a week, Robins told us, it had blocked the channel.

Late in the afternoon we drew in at a dock, a large concrete affair which actually floated on the water. But it was the only modern note. On the shore, little thatched huts lay half-hidden under great banana leaves, which in turn were shaded by overhanging palms. And there were bright flowers, and brighter dresses on the women who, with loads of washing balanced upon their heads, came down to the river. Naked children played among the dugout canoes pulled up on the beach. A combination of elements which always spells the tropics: a carelessness, an evidence of easy, happy living, a sense of both the disorganized and the luxuriant.

Lying at anchor near us was an old sailing ship which reminded Robins that at a nearby spot the Spaniards had first come upon the river. He was buying tangerines from the little boys on the dock, a dozen for a nickel.

"Reason for this kind of dock," Robins pointed out, "is that the river level varies so throughout the year. Up above in the narrow part, during flood time it can be two hundred

feet higher. That's why we all have to use chutes instead of regulation docks." He had told us that his Company furnished one-third of all the maté produced in Paraguay. How did the work compare with that in the Matté-Larangeira? "We're more primitive about it, I suppose," he answered. "It's entirely night work, too. The heat withers the leaves too quickly if you cut during the day. Just about the time any normal man is going to bed, our men start to work. We're done, and the leaves put into ox-carts, by sunup."

Yet despite the privations he had experienced he was more fond of that kind of life than of the years he had lived in the Argentine, particularly in Buenos Aires. "It's too much like the States — or England," he went on. "I suppose it may be interesting, too, for the same reason. Those Argentines we were talking to this morning are full of optimism. They know the ground work's done, and their country is on the up-grade. The only one in South America with a certainly good future. I think you're better off to stick to less civilized places."

"We couldn't live here long anyway, with the exchange the way it is," we answered. "Living seems to be as costly as in the States." As a matter of fact, we were indebted to Robins for being on this boat at all. If he had not appeared in Posadas and introduced us at the bank, we should have been stranded with our perfectly good but useless travelers' cheques. At last we had learned our lesson: it was much safer to carry actual cash.

As the boat neared the shore again everyone gathered by the rail to look for alligators. Robins was a little bored with that ordinary pastime and much more excited when the sun began to set behind an island. It was an unusual sunset. The sun itself was hidden beyond a turret cloud which had turned to purple with a brilliant scarlet edging. From it irradiated long red and purple streamers. Against this the island was a black silhouette, the water nearer us quite yellow, with touches of green. Robins suddenly turned his back on the

scene. "I like to watch the eastern sky when there's a good sunset. Look at those reflected rays; you can barely see them." They shot up in pale pink and blue. "You'll be seeing a different sunset shortly in the mountains," he said. "From what I've heard, you'll like Bolivia. Certainly it's the unknown land."

"Yes, and we should be getting there in time for some excitement." We had heard in Posadas that a revolution had taken place last Sunday.

"Amazing thing. The Bolivians ought to be weary after the Chaco war. Both Bolivia and Paraguay have had their troubles since that ridiculous affair. We had a change of government ourselves a few months ago. . . . But you're going into a kind of country I don't know. In a day after you leave the river you'll be away from the real tropics. Although actually you'll go back across the Tropic of Capricorn again."

"Yes, this is the transition for us."

An American woman had been sitting with us as we talked. "Tell me," she asked, "whatever do the people do out on these *pampas?*"

In itself it was a perfectly sensible question. Robins' answer perhaps came from a surfeit of talking.

"What do they do? Why, sit and watch the cattle breed."

3.
BOLIVIA

YELLOW MOUNTAINS AND BLUE SKY

LA LOMA
TRINIDAD
←TO PERU
LA PAZ
GUAQUI
COCHABAMBA
V. GRANADA
AIQUILE
SUCRE
POTOSI
RIO MULATOS
NAZARENO
VILLAZON
FROM ARGENTINA
BOLIVIA

ASCENT TO THE ANDES

Leaving behind the green tropics, the red earth. Crossing the Argentine pampas and in forty-eight hours of travel arriving at the frontier of Bolivia, in the Andes. From nearly sea level to an altitude of two miles. . . .

Forty-eight consecutive hours sitting bolt upright on the hard wooden benches of the second class coach — for travel in the Argentine is expensive. Forty-eight hours of dust, of never daring to leave our seats for fear someone would usurp them. Forty-eight hours without a square meal, because *naturalemente* second class passengers are not allowed in the dining car. Following the example of the rest of the coach, leaning out at stations to buy oranges and *empanadas,* delicious flaky pastries filled with meat.

Packed in with this mob of very human beings: little children sprawling in the aisle; mothers nursing any child up to the age of five to stop its bawling; husbands singing to the accompaniment of guitar or accordion — each station brings

a new musician. . . . A wild, jolly nightmare sort of ride, rolling towards the Andes. A ride smelling of babies, spilled drinks and disinfectant.

For a while there was an overdressed drugstore *gaucho* to amuse us. Better than a bookful of statistics or the business men we had met on the river steamers, he demonstrated that Argentina is becoming civilized and industrialized — the United States, they proudly say, of South America. The real *gaucho* has gone. . . .

Sleeping for two nights sitting up, changing cars at little Añatuya at four in the cold, misty morning. And just as the light began to fail on the second afternoon, coming upon bright fields of sugar cane and the rich provincial town of Tucumán, the last tropical vestige before reaching the mountains.

The following morning, we knew: the air sparkled in a way that meant only one thing. We had left the humid side of the continent and were breathing mountain air. It would have been easy to tell even without the preview of the heights from Tucumán. . . . We knew it when we alighted before breakfast at Jujuy. Ahead, framed through the great steel arch of the station, we saw the Andes. Now, as the train moved upward through a great valley, we both spontaneously noted an even greater change. During the night the earth had changed its complementary colors!

In place of the very obvious red and green we had seen all through Brazil, now came yellow and blue. The mountains we were climbing were quite barren, utterly bereft of vegetation, and everywhere a brilliant yellow. And we became conscious, as we never had in low-lying Brazil, of the dazzling blue sky: so solid a color that it actually seemed to etch out the mountain tops, making their forms insubstantial by comparison. Even the streams belonged not to the earth, as had the muddy red ones we had known before, but to the sky: they were clear, reflecting the blueness. It was not at all simply a change from luxuriant tropics to bare moun-

tains, that was the surprising fact: it was one startling color combination exchanged for another. And this time the color was arranged in greater masses. The world had opened up a third dimension: there were the vistas of distant mountains, as well as the emphatic vertical accent of the tall peaks directly above our train.

The landscape changed, and so did the people. Quite as suddenly and completely. At the wayside stations now there were Indians. We had seen Guaraní Indians, of course, but these were mountain people; the Spanish conquest had changed them no more than had the building of this railroad and all that it entailed.

Their features were definitely Mongoloid in cast, even their clothes were different. The women wore a hat shaped like a man's derby: brown felt with soft curling brim and undented crown. About their shoulders were bright-colored *mantas,* in colors complementary to the skirts which flared out over heavy petticoats. Bright magentas and yellows, peacock blues and greens, shouted from every station platform now. But dull red ponchos and curious knitted caps with long ear tabs contented the men: evidently they felt that if their upper extremities were warm, their legs, encased only in tight knee-breeches, could shift for themselves. On their feet they wore simple *alpargatas,* a kind of leather sandal.

One element was still missing. An element we had seen only as children in storybooks. And presently down below on a mountain slope we saw it — a herd of shaggy brown llamas, symbol of the Andes, a part of the escutcheons of both Bolivia and Peru. They lolloped away from the train on their thin legs, their ridiculous long necks wobbling.

The metamorphosis was complete now. All afternoon we would climb higher, until tonight we would arrive at La Quiaca, ten thousand feet above sea level, on the border of Bolivia. But we had seen the transformation. The Indians and their llamas, the yellow mountains rearing up into a dazzling blue sky. . . .

THE ALTIPLANO

HIKING

One thing we are delighted to do this first morning in Bolivia: ship our suitcases ahead of us. To have nothing but the shirts on our backs for the next month or so, without so much as a single change. To be able to go anywhere by any kind of transportation; to have the fine feeling that there are no packages to lose, no laundry to be done, no baggage boys to tip, nothing to carry. Even to enjoy being just a bit dirty.

As we cross over to Villazon and submit to a perfunctory customs inspection we do not even know our next objective. But when we take our luggage to the railroad station, this question is solved. The International Train which comes up from Buenos Aires and proceeds directly north to La Paz, the capital, will not be through for several days. Why not start walking, then, to see this *altiplano* country, and stop at an agreeable town?

We go in search of blankets, remembering how cold it was last night, although this morning the sun is blazing down from a cloudless sky. When we exchange our money we

have a most pleasant surprise. The *boliviano* is now worth only six American cents, and is likely to go even lower, but its local purchasing power has not fallen. For less than three dollars we purchase two very fine white wool blankets, one with red stripes, the other with blue. Then a cake of chocolate, just in case we find no lunch, straps to fasten the blankets like knapsacks, and we are ready. But no: a soldier comes running after us. We must first have our passports examined and our visés stamped again by the *policía militar:* Bolivia still demands wartime surveillance.

A sort of you-must-be-crazy expression greets us when we ask a storekeeper about the road, and we rely on a faded old map, made in 1900. It comes in four pieces, which we put together like a picture puzzle — a puzzle that tells us there is a town some seven leagues ahead, a good day's walk. So we are off down the railroad tracks, rediscovering the fact that rail ties do not make easy hiking, and wondering if there will be other towns along the way.

The aspect of the country, certainly, is not too reassuring. Now there are few mountains rising above this barren landscape, for this is the *altiplano,* the high plane, formed by the great Cordillera Real of the Andes, coming down through Peru and extending southward along the border between Chile and Argentina. A vast deserted expanse of yellow land, with the deep blue sky above from which the noonday sun beats down. We remember that we are once more inside the Tropic of Capricorn, approximately on a line with the *fazenda,* almost as near to the equator now as we were in Rio. The air may be rarefied at eleven thousand feet, but the sun still has its power. It would be good to come upon a stream. . . .

But there is no water in this dry season, and in lieu of a drink we eat a piece of chocolate, lying with our heads on the rails and our feet propped up on a bank so the blood will run out of them. The chocolate turns out to be a poor imitation, made without milk, and only increases our thirst.

Long before darkness arrives the sun sets below this plateau, but still no signs of life, except once when we pass an abandoned shack, the windows all knocked out, and not a suggestion of water anywhere around. This is more than we had bargained for — nearly twenty miles already and no assurance that there will ever be a town. What if the recent war has so depopulated the country that our seven-league town is no longer? It is very dark now, moonless, and though the stars are brilliant and clear in the thin air, we are too tired to appreciate them except when we lie down for a moment's rest. And about eight o'clock we come to a branch in the line; this is helpful. Nothing to do but guess, and we stumble along for another hour, more sure than ever that our first night in Bolivia will be spent outdoors. But isn't that a light ahead? We almost run for it, tired though we are.

Mojo, they tell us, is only two kilometers ahead; this is merely a watering station. We are to ask for the *casa de corregidor.*

A collection of mud houses is faintly discernible through the darkness: not a light is showing anywhere. By the process of knocking on doors, sometimes receiving no response at all or finding the place deserted, we finally come to the right *casa.* It is a small *tienda,* or store, run by the mayor, and in the weak lamplight there are seated an Indian woman, a ragged man and the mayor himself. They return our *buenas noches* listlessly. Is there anything to eat? we ask unceremoniously, eyeing the shelves.

" *No hay, señores:* There is nothing."

This is incomprehensible; someone in the town *must* sell something to eat. With a shrug they explain the situation. There are six hundred hungry Paraguayan soldiers locked in the big jail here, to be exchanged for Bolivians. In Villazon we had seen these men coming across the border, each with obviously new clothes and a little paper suitcase. After arguments on both sides, misunderstandings and disagree-

ments, the " repatriation " of prisoners of war, a year after the armistice, is under way. These Paraguayans must be kept under lock and key until the other soldiers pass by, so that there will be no fighting. Meanwhile the prisoners have eaten the town out of food.

But surely we can buy something? That can of sardines?

Reluctantly they agree. Despite the grumbling of his wife, the mayor admits he has a room, too, and we may have some coffee.

Altitude increases one's appetite by geometric progression; the sardines and the coffee are gone in a moment, and we do not object when they give us a tiny piece of bread already nibbled on. But we are ready for bed. There are two bedsprings but only one mattress, so we share the one. An hour later, after we have turned and tossed, Bowman asks, " Are you still awake? "

" Very much so. Let's flip for the mattress and take separate beds."

Dickinson loses and we divide the covers. Still, through the whole night, punctuated by a little clock which rings violently at each quarter-hour, we cannot sleep: we must be too tired. At least we can make an early start.

And buying another can of sardines, we begin hiking again. Today, although it is the same barren scenery, yellow earth against a dazzling blue sky, we are presently lucky enough to find a stream as the day grows hotter. Along its edge are icicles. . . .

Our map shows several towns now. Optimistically we head for one, a mass of brown huts with straw roofs, of one color with the earth. In the midst of this hamlet stands a small church, its façade whitewashed, a wooden cross leaning against the wall: a clear outline against the blue sky. Its doors are locked; the whole town seems quite deserted. Finally we find a man and ask the usual question about food.

" *No hay, señores.* We are a poor people."

At the railroad station there is a house. We ask the woman:

behind her we can see a basket with a few eggs in it. Our question becomes more specific.

But she shakes her head. The eggs are all they have to eat. What good is money if she can buy nothing?

And that is the answer. It is our initiation into Bolivia in a way we would never have known had we taken the train;

it will not be our last encounter with Bolivia's post-war motto: *No hay.*

A few kilometers ahead is a good town, the woman has assured us, but after a while we almost doubt her word. The stream we found this morning seems to be the only one; and why should anyone live here? This much we know from the map, that Bolivia is a large country, third largest in South America if the disputed Chaco is included. With a population of only three millions! Plenty of room for hiking.

At the end of a long grade the track rounds a curve and crosses a trestle. Below us and in the distance is a valley

with a few green trees and — houses. An old man comes by on the road beneath us, riding a burro while his wife walks — the usual custom. The town, he tells us when we question him, is Arenales; it is quicker to follow the road than to keep to the railroad.

In the town we find the same story. *No hay, señores.* A man in a suit checkered black and white like a race tout's answers our questions. But at the jingle of coins in our pockets he relents. Two rickety chairs are placed on the dirt floor of his house. He is a lazy individual, but energetic enough to swear vehemently at his ragged, dirty children. While they drag a piece of meat from beneath the bed he suggests we try *singani.* Although we do not hesitate to accept, he feels he must explain that this is Bolivia's national liquor, made from grapes. It has no such flavor, however, but is so strong that it brings tears to our eyes. The only thing like it is a poor grade of Mexican *mescal.*

As we eat the pig fat and piece of bread his children have brought, we ask him if there is a larger village not too far ahead. Ah, yes! Nazareno. *Seguro?* we ask skeptically. We can walk there by nightfall?

" *Como no!* " — that familiar expression of assent which does not mean " How not? " or even " Why not? " but still conveys that sense of how could it be otherwise. He adds that it is only fourteen kilometers if we go by the " royal road."

It is already five o'clock, but he is so assuring we are ready to believe again. Climbing a hill on the other side of town we are presented with a view of a long pleasant valley. The dusty road leads down through a kind of lane, the cactus haloed by the low-slanting light upon its spurs. Now and then there is a house, and frequently willow trees whose leaves look wet and glistening in the sunlight. Just for amusement we ask every man we meet how far it is to Nazareno. Without variation for the next hour the reply is, five kilometers.

It is dark again when a man on horseback finally gives us a different answer: *un media leguita,* half a little league. And

in less than that uncertain distance we come upon the first houses, running up a rise in the ground and down on the other side to the railroad tracks. We pass several well-stocked *tiendas,* and beside the station there is actually a hotel!

Every small town has the advantage over a larger place in that one can immediately become acquainted with a few of the people. We met the Storekeeper first, who, after hearing about our trip, insisted we try some decent *singani,* which he served with a fresh grape in the bottom of the little glass. The manner in which we encountered him was amusing. We had been walking down the cobblestoned street when suddenly Bowman felt dizzy and we took to the nearest shop to sit down, which happened to be the Storekeeper's. He seemed to know what was wrong, for he was around the counter at once with something in his hand.

"Here, take this," he ordered. It was a piece of garlic, and did the trick in an instant. Bowman grinned a little sheepishly. "Don't be surprised," the Storekeeper told him. "You've just had a touch of the *puna—soroche,* mountain-sickness, from the high altitude. It's common enough on the *altiplano.* Your heart takes a jump, or you don't get enough air. Makes some people sick when they first come up here." That was why, he went on, all the Indians chew *coca,* the green leaf from which cocaine is made. It warded off the *puna* and stopped hunger and fatigue.

"Sounds like a good cure-all."

The Storekeeper shook his head. "It's the worst evil of Bolivia, but what can you do about it? Exactly half this country is composed of full-blooded Indians whose ancestors have chewed *coca* for no one knows how many generations. They have a legend about the *coca,*" he went on. "It's just one of the many you'll hear about the olden days." And this was the tale we heard:

When the Spaniards first came through the Andes to plunder and destroy the temples, an old priest named Kjana-Chuyma fled to a hiding place on the eastern shore of great

Lake Titicaca, carrying with him the sacred jewels of the Temple of the Sun. But the Spaniards followed and tortured him to discover where he had hidden the gold and silver ornaments. In the end, disgusted with their failure, they went away, leaving him for dead.

That night, however, while delirious from his wounds, the priest had a strange dream in which the Sun appeared to him and said: "My son, your sacrifice deserves a reward. I shall grant what you desire." The dying man thought for a long while. Finally he asked for the return to power of the Indians and the destruction of the Spanish invaders.

"Alas," the Sun answered, "what you ask is no longer possible. Their gods are stronger than I. But think again, and tonight in a prayer tell me what it is you wish."

So the old priest thought again, and he remembered that the Spaniards were taking all the gold and silver from his people and that they were miserable and sad. That night he prayed: "O Sun, I would ask you now for something which will relieve the sorrow of my people when they have been subjugated by the Spaniards."

And suddenly a mysterious inner force possessed him and he was carried to a great mountain top. Out of the clear night air a voice called to him, saying: "I have heard your prayer, and will grant your wish. Take this little plant back to your people. For the Indians it will always be a solace when they are tired or hurt or sad. For the white man it will be as a poison which causes insanity."

So the old priest descended the mountain and, knowing that he was about to die, assembled many Indians and with his last words told them about the *coca,* for that was the plant the Sun had given him.

Three whole days the Indians wept over his body, and on the evening of the third day, as he had directed, they carried the old priest to the same mountain top and buried him, ringed by a circle of this new plant. Sadly remembering his

words, they began to chew the *coca*. And suddenly, as their sorrow lifted, they realized the miracle. . . .

We came back to talk with the Storekeeper several times, hearing the first reactions from him and his customers to the new military *junta* which had taken over the government after a bloodless revolution. No one knew a great deal about Colonel Toro, the new president by his own proclamation, or what would happen. Their attitude was generally one of profound skepticism. As you would find in any very provincial town. Politics might interfere with, but seldom helped their lives. There had been so many revolutions, over sixty in the hundred years since Bolivia had become an independent republic divorced from Spain. Six of her presidents had been assassinated. She had been harassed from all sides, losing her seaport on the Pacific and a good deal of territory that is now Peru and Brazil; she had fought until she was poor for the Chaco, the Alsace-Lorraine of South America.

Certainly the Indians we saw every day were unperturbed by any change of government far away in La Paz. They had weathered the Spanish conquest; they could stand a great deal more. Daily the men drove in their burros with sacks of minerals, mostly lead, from the mines in the mountains.

From our hotel we could look across a wide expanse of river bed, the stream shrunken to meager proportions now, to the little mining towns. And unconcernedly the women sold their fruits and vegetables or walked along the street spinning their wool with a hand device into heavy yarn. No women were without this wool, it was as much a part of their costume as the great skirts which flared out behind as they passed along on bare feet. . . .

The last night we had gone to bed early and had been asleep several hours when we were awakened by a piano playing in the next room. A very simple tune with a catchy rhythm to which occasionally the people would keep time by clapping their hands: one, one-two-three, one, one-two-three. We were just going off to sleep again when the door opened and our hotel patron, obviously quite embarrassed, came in. Would we like to join the party? There was a man here who spoke English and would very much like to talk with us. Yawning, we put on our clothes again.

In a room lighted by two candles several soldiers were dancing with their girls, all in overcoats. A little man came up to us, beer glass in hand, and welcomed us to the party. This was a continuation of a fiesta that had started at his house; we must have some beer — all of this in English garbled not so much by his lack of knowledge as by his drunkenness. We sat on a sofa and had a glass of beer. He had been in the States for nine years, he told us. We were to call him Hugo. In fact, we were his dear American friends, a phrase he kept inserting into every sentence. The United States was the most wonderful country. Always he told his friends that what Bolivia needed was a North American dictator.

We were hardly prepared for all these compliments and tried to turn the conversation to his own country. What did he think of this new government, for instance?

Hugo was not to be denied. He wanted to tell us about the petroleum land he owned. His father had sold some of it to Standard Oil, he claimed, but he still had a great deal left.

While he had been in the States, Hugo had repeatedly begged papa to send samples so that he might show them to the oil companies. "But my father, he no do it. He never do it."

That had been the tragedy of Hugo's life. Perhaps we would like to help him form a company. He had the clear titles, claims without dispute; tomorrow he would show us all the papers. The land was near Villa Montes, in the middle of the country, according to his story. We had been studying the map enough to realize that instead it was in the heart of the disputed Chaco, practically Paraguayan property now, unless the foreign arbitrators imposed a strange kind of treaty. We endeavored to avoid the question, to change the subject. But Hugo would not be interrupted except to order the hotel keeper to bring us more beer. The story of his father's lack of responsiveness was repeated again and still again. Whatever the truth was, and no matter how drunk Hugo became, there was a significance in the story. In this relaxed frame of mind he was repeating the cry of a comparatively unexploited country: more foreign capital. And as we finally left him, he was still muttering into his beer:

"But my father, he no do it. He never do it."

POTOSÍ

SILVER AND TIN

"No hay camas, señores. No hay frazadas tampoco."

No beds on the train. Nor blankets. This is carrying *no hay* a little too far. Our mutterings freeze into small clouds in the cold air.

It is four-thirty in the morning at Rio Mulato, which means the railroad junction where we have left the so-called International Limited bound for La Paz, and have boarded the Potosí train. After sitting up all night in the jammed first class coach, to come to this. For we have lost our blankets — our blankets and our toothbrushes. And we are about to go over the highest railway pass in the world: 16,500 feet above sea level. In the cold hours before the early sunrise at this height.

We do a war dance up and down the aisle, half in anger, half in the hope of getting warm. The few moments we have spent before the coal fire in the station agent's office make the cold feel more intense now. So many mischances have happened together, it is as if the gods have conspired

against us. While we were blithely and a little too unconcernedly eating dinner this evening our coach was changed and our blanket rolls of course disappeared. They are telegraphing back; but blankets are too popular; they will not be found.

The only other occupants of the car, a Scotch missionary and his family, take our plight philosophically, wrapped as they are in several blankets. Twenty-five below zero in the States last winter seemed nothing compared to this. And in six hours we shall be sweating again: that is the ridiculous part.

Finally we discover a soldier curled up in the next car. We persuade him to loan us a blanket he is not using. (Everyone laughs a little at the Bolivian private; he is always shaped from the same stocky pattern, his wide face is set on a bull neck, his grey uniform is so far from smart.) This soldier, at least, is a thorough gentleman. We wrap up in the blanket, even our heads covered. We must try to keep warm, there will be no coffee for several hours. Well, we wanted to see Potosí. In Nazareno we heard fine tales of it; no one has made us come. . . .

By six-thirty a little light begins to filter through the sky, and putting out our heads we see that we are skirting the rim of a giant saucer. In the rarefied air the smoke of the locomotive hangs low, trailing out across a landscape of neutral colors: the black of the burnt tundra grass along the tracks, the white sand, the yellow-green of the stubble grass. A freight train comes puffing through the hollow of the saucer, where we have been, and we appreciate the scale: we seem to be on top of the world looking down upon the whole of it.

Slowly the sun rises, first striking the tops of the mountain peaks, staining them like blood on sacrificial altars. We are nearly to the *cumbre,* the high point. And suddenly we understand what the Andes are, in all their forbidding, terrifying extent. This cold and endless space is like some unin-

habited planet; and yet, here is a station, surrounded by a few houses of stone. Some Indians come running. Now for the first time we see men in costumes as outlandish as those of the women; their thin clothes and legs bare to the knee make us shiver all the more. For it is not any warmer yet.

For several minutes now Dickinson has been missing. Probably he has gone to see if the diner is open. An hour later he turns up. In a last attempt he had endeavored to get a blanket from the *camarero.* Relenting, the porter had sworn him to secrecy, unlocked a closet door, and thrust him in, locking the door after him. There was not quite enough room to sit down, but there was a shelf and piled all about were a dozen heavy red blankets! The mystery of this plenty amidst our poverty has remained unsolved. . . .

Now we find the diner open and sit drinking innumerable cups of coffee as the light grows and more distant mountains come into sight. Below us are corrals for the llamas beside clear blue streams which are still covered with ice. To the south and east an even vaster panorama opens out. For miles upon miles there must be no one but a few lonely Indians. We have a new respect for the Spaniards, even driven as they were with a lust for supposed riches, who founded Potosí soon after they had conquered the Incas in Peru.

The color scheme of yellow mountains and blue sky holds, but with an infinite variety of shapes, all morning long. This train is an incongruity in such a landscape. Certainly there had to be a fortune in prospect for the world to penetrate to this mountain town.

As we are having lunch we come into the valley. At the other end of it lies Potosí, highest full-fledged town in the world.

As we leave the station and climb the cobblestone streets we see the great pyramid of the *Cerro Rico,* the Rich Hill, rearing its red and yellow cone above the town and its sur-

rounding, utterly barren mountains: the hill which was first mined by the Spaniards. Today, hundreds of little ore buckets are swinging down the cables to the mill below.

But as we reach the *plaza* with its cathedral and its statues, we are struck most of all by the houses. Bright ultramarine beside pink, yellow beside turquoise. And each with its balcony of brown weathered timber against these bright stucco walls, winding up through ways so narrow one might shake

hands from balcony to balcony. In all our long journey this is the most picturesque town we have yet seen. Gone now are the matter-of-fact Portuguese towns of Brazil, the modern, up-to-date ones of Argentina. Now nature supplies the majesty, but man the color.

It is Sunday and the square is swarming with *cholos,* half-breed Indians; the women with a curious kind of headgear — a tall-crowned hat of molded straw, stiff and whitewashed. The only neutral spots in a mass of orange skirts and green or, most common of all, magenta, shawls. Like the houses, their clothes are more brilliant by contrast with their neighbors'.

At the upper end of the *plaza,* where a cross-street too narrow for vehicles serves as a promenade, men are standing on tables, conducting a lottery. Candies and toy llamas and cardboard dollhouses are the prizes. . . . Down a side street is the market, entered through a crumbling archway which forms part of the surrounding arcade. From every shop hang the same bright skirts and blouses. There is no kind of article not for sale, from low-crowned hats, like those worn by picadors in the bull ring, to vegetables. Vegetables always sold by the Indian women who here sit in groups and long rows about the central fountain, in front of the butchers with their sheep and llama meat. The Indian men, dressed in ragged knee breeches and often with footless wool stockings like Alpiners, their hair twisted into pigtails, are wandering leisurely about or bringing in their llamas whose ears are tipped with bright bows of unspun wool.

So plainly everywhere are the signs of the Spanish conquest that the statue of the early patriot, Ibáñez, in his coat of armor and knee-breeches, seems more alive than the movie theater, a converted convent, its intricately carved façade nearly hidden by posters of Dietrich and Chevalier.

A military band is playing in the *plaza* now, but it is too cool to sit on the benches for long. People have been going into the cathedral, and we follow them. Its interior, white with gilt trimmings about the nave columns and the triforium, is unexpectedly chaste. Yet it is a perfect background for the red-robed priest intoning the service. No Indians frequent this church: theirs is the one we have seen beyond the wrought-iron doors of a market gate, its façade a delicate lacework of stone, quite oriental in feeling. In the early days of the conquest, we are reminded, so complete was the feudal system, so bound were the Indians to the soil and to their masters, that a papal bull was necessary to decree that the natives were not beasts but had souls like ordinary men. . . .

As we come out of the cathedral we are startled to hear ourselves addressed by name.

" *Señores* Bowman and Dickinson? I have just received a letter from my friend in Nazareno who runs a store there. He has said you were coming to Potosí. I saw you go into the *iglesia* just now. They are the ones! I thought. Because there are not many unfamiliar faces in Potosí."

Señor Guitterez, as we find his name to be, suggests we walk down towards the Convent of Santa Teresa. Although very few people seem to know it, these nuns make the finest candy in town. " But you will not see the sisters," he says as we enter a courtyard.

There is a small revolving door in the wall. When a voice answers the *Señor's* call he places his money in one section of the door; it turns, and we are presented with a dozen delicious candies made of honey and milk.

" As far as anyone knows," *Señor* Guitterez tells us, " there are only seven or eight women left in the convent. Because now it is against the law for girls to take the veil. It is the same with Santa Monica, up above. You must see it."

We follow him up — it is always literally up or down here, and at this height we are constantly puffing. On a poor street we find the convent, its façade, like so many, a cluster of stonework about a tremendous door; the rest of the building is of quite unrelieved stucco in the usual fashion of Spanish baroque. And always about the flanking columns, on every building we have seen here in Potosí, are entwined grape patterns. The motifs are worthy of Spain herself, but there is a certain unique quality which proclaims a native Indian craftsman's hand in the actual carving.

Above many of the doors are still the coats of arms of noble families, or the royal escutcheon itself, as in the case of the Old Mint, across from our hotel.

This *Casa de Moneda,* the *Señor* explains, is one of the finest of colonial buildings. In it were stamped the coins from the silver which the *Cerro Rico* provided. Slaves were kept imprisoned to work the heavy wood machinery, and from a gallery above a squadron of soldiers defended the royal

wealth against the frequent marauders of those rowdy days. "You know, Potosí was the most populous city in all of South America by the end of the sixteenth century," he continues. "There were 220,000 people! Now of course it still looks busy, because all the houses are clustered at the foot of the Hill — those up above were swept away by an early flood. But today we have barely one-seventh of that population. Then, everyone was rolling in money, even after the king received his one-fifth of all that was mined. It must have been like your California in the gold rush days. Yet the mines have brought much sadness."

"They're still mining silver?"

"Oh, no, not for fifty years. It is *estaño*, tin, now. The Americans are running it. You must meet them."

And the next day we did meet one of the Americans, who invited us down to the mill: a chemist who was good, and knew it. We had met in the hotel bar, where he had indignantly asked if we were Americans, too.

"Everybody's an American," he asserted. "They wouldn't

have hired a Dutchman like me if I hadn't been born in Idaho. A new company takes over this whole blooming Hill, and they hire nothing but Americans. A company backed by English capital and organized by a German and a Frenchman. Can you beat it?" He seemed thoroughly amazed at the situation. "It's as bad as the old prohibition days in Mexico, when we used to smuggle in the malt of old Scotch whisky, mix it with alcohol, and sneak it into the States."

We had failed to see the connection in his remarks, but when we presented ourselves at his laboratory he was in a more jovial frame of mind. "You've got to meet the Chief," he insisted, and piloted us into a neat office.

The Chief, a veteran who had been sent to Potosí to speed up production, welcomed us cordially despite our old clothes and disreputable appearance. "Used to go tramping around myself when I was younger," he told us. "Took me a month to get across the country on muleback, and last year I did it by plane in four hours! But you've still got to go the old way sometimes. . . . Well, we'll talk later, after you've seen the mill. Ray!" he called, and a young fellow in leather jacket and riding breeches came in. "This is our metallurgist; he'll show you around."

The mill buildings were bunched together in a tangle beyond the office, further complicated by construction work which Ray told us would soon double the production. Patiently he led us through, explaining a process which is simple in outline and infinitely complex in detail. But what first struck us was the number of women at work.

"Have to use 'em," our guide said. "You see, we've been short-handed ever since the war started."

"How about these soldiers returning from Paraguay?"

"No use. The government gives 'em their back pay and a bonus besides, enough to keep 'em alive for perhaps a year. Until that money's used up we'll never see 'em."

We continued through the mill buildings, the Metallurgist pointing out how the ore, crushed and mixed with water, is run across slanting tables of linoleum. There, by constant

shaking, the water is drained off and the heavier tin is left. In essence, this was the process, entirely mechanical, although of course it was repeated in various ways to increase the pure tin percentage, in what is called the " concentrate." This concentrate, about forty per cent pure tin, is then shipped to England. " We can't afford to smelt here. Fluxes aren't handy and fuel's too high. In the old days, they brought in charcoal by mule, but that's too expensive. See, in these drying furnaces even now we have to use llama dung."

" You meet with some problems you'd never have to consider in the States."

" Lord, yes! And take this matter of employing women. Even children, as you've seen. Back in the States they couldn't do it. Maybe it's not the best idea, but we're not making them slaves any more than they've always been."

He seemed satisfied with this justification: after all, the Company had no alternative. Not until several weeks after we left Potosí did the new government put through a decree stating that all men between eighteen and sixty must work — in answer to just such complaints, especially by the mines, which were now being more heavily taxed. But the situation will always remain the same: if men do not want to work they can easily fake a job. Basically, Bolivia's cry is for more population. Only because of the shortage of hands do the laggards stand out. . . .

The Chief was waiting for us, hat in hand. " We're all going to have tea at your house, Ray," he stated. " Come get in my car." A Packard with a chauffeur was waiting for us!

For the first time in weeks we were suddenly and painfully conscious of our ratty old traveling clothes: our stained leather jackets, baggy pants and hob-nail shoes.

" Not — not in these clothes," we stammered; and were instantly afraid we might be invited to change to something more respectable. Something more — a little bit more — respectable was in our baggage in La Paz.

" What the hell! " the Chief growled. " We're all a bunch of miners." And he shoved us into his limousine.

The Metallurgist's wife and another young lady who greeted us pretended to be equally oblivious of our outfits. While someone turned on the radio and we heard, of all things, a weather forecast for lower New England, we roasted ourselves in front of an electric heater. If the Englishman's first thought in a foreign land is to establish a polo field, the American's is to install heat and modern plumbing. It was the first time we had been warm in Bolivia after sundown.

The Chief drew up a chair beside us. " There's a legend of how they found silver here," he said, " but I suppose you've heard it. No? Well, it seems an Indian named Diego Huallpa who worked in a mine over at Porco happened onto the *Cerro* one day when he was looking for a llama he'd lost. He got stranded here at night, so he crawled into a cave and lighted a fire. And then he saw the silver, right on top of the ground. Erosion had partly cleaned off the outcrops, which extended as much as twenty-five feet above the hard slate. And that started things going."

" They've taken out between two and three billion dollars in silver since then," the Metallurgist put in. " Just since 1544."

One of the women said, " I'll bet you'd have liked it in the old days, Chief."

He looked at her suspiciously. " My dear, I've seen enough fights in my own day. . . . The Spanish king told everyone to go to it, and the result was a mining free-for-all. But it was the same way till this new Company was formed. We used to pay out more for defense than production."

" You mean for policemen? "

" No, no. They wouldn't do any good. Defense work in mining means working a whole lot of veins before you want to, just to keep the other fellow next door from scooping it out right under your eyes. There're five thousand dumps on that hill. Everybody was diggin'."

" When did tin come into the picture? "

" The silver veins began to run out in the 'eighties. Un-

derstand, they weren't making fortunes even then. All the easy money was gone long before. Then in 'ninety-one the States passed the Cleveland Bill demonetizing silver and going on the gold standard. That shot the works. Somewhere along in those years wives stopped cooking and began to use can openers, so that made tin profitable. The first ore they took out was half tin — think of it! In comparison to — what are we running now, Ray? "

" Three and a half per cent today, Chief." The Metallurgist, we had found, had the job of getting the most out of the ore — keeping the " tailings " low.

We turned to the Chief. " Is that enough tin? "

" Still running at a profit. Or going to by the end of the year. In London they're quoting tin at half what it was back in 'twenty-eight — that was two thousand bucks a ton. But we're not complaining."

He was the first American business man we hadn't heard complaining since one stormy day in October, 1929. . . .

The *cholo* cook had brought us such very American tea, with peanut butter and jam sandwiches, that we lost all interest in mining. The conversation turned to the recent war, and that made the Metallurgist chuckle. " Remember the Lieutenant? " he asked them all. They began to laugh, and he told us the story.

They had first met him on the train. He was a soldier of fortune, a young fellow who had enlisted in the Bolivian army. When they saw him he had been back from the Chaco only a short time; he was dirty, and still full of the tomorrow-we-may-die spirit. " He insisted on showing us what he called his ' trophies of the Chaco,' " the Metallurgist went on, " which consisted of an old armadillo shell, a snakeskin which he said was all that was left of a meal, a moth-eaten monkey skin, and an ostrich egg. . . ."

" He wanted to give our little boy the ostrich egg," his wife added.

" Yes, and when I asked him how old the thing was, he

balanced it on the ends of his fingers and casually remarked that the easiest way to clear out the train would be to let it drop. Some guy," he laughed. " He'd just been paid off, but he was dead broke again. ' Spent a week with an actress,' he said. . . . You'll see him, all right, when you go on to Sucre. Can't miss him, he's six feet three. But whatever you think of him personally, he can give you the low-down on the Chaco. I guess it wasn't any picnic."

The Chief made a rumbling noise in his throat. He was an old-timer, he'd knocked around too much himself. And like all men of that sort he was skeptical of other people's tall tales, a debunker without the time to do it on paper. " Seen the Chaco myself," he sniffed.

Later, as we were driven up to our hotel in the luxurious Packard, we felt again the incongruity. Not only of ourselves in our tramp-outfits, but of this whole American side of Potosí life as against that of the Indians.

A few days later we investigated the Hill itself. As we wound up the road the town sprawled out below us, losing its color as only the roof tops remained visible; lost in the barren mountainside with only domes, towers and the monumental column in the *plaza* to give it distinguishing form. Directly above our heads were the cables with their constant burden of ore buckets, twenty-four hours a day: the mill worked on three shifts.

At the main entrance to the mines, beside the sheds and buildings, we were met by the Geologist, a slow-spoken young man from the western part of the States. "Don't suppose you're interested in a lot of technical stuff," he drawled, "but let's have a look around outside."

"You get a regular gale up here, don't you?" The wind was blowing thick dust across the shelf where we stood.

The Geologist pointed up towards the brown summit of the cone. "Ought to feel it up there. You'd hardly think it takes half a day on muleback to reach the top, would you? It's about on a line with the railroad pass you came over." Sixteen thousand and some feet: Popocatepetl in Mexico rises only a little more than that, its peak continually covered with snow. Certainly we were in the tropics!

Small cars were being pulled out of the mine entrance by a diminutive engine and hauled to the crusher. Women here too were helping break up the ore. We mentioned what they had told us of labor troubles, down at the mill. "We'll always be short of workers," the Geologist said, "because of the fiestas. Potosí has more damned holidays than any other town in South America. Half our men and women don't show up on those days, and those that do are usually drunk. All we can do is prepare a shaft so we can haul out a lot of ore with the least possible effort. The Indians and the whole town are dependent on the *Cerro,* and yet they do everything to keep us from going full blast. . . . Let's get some lamps and go into the tunnel."

We lighted three torches and followed him into the main shaft, sometimes stooping low or hugging the side when a

train of cars went by. At first it was cold, then as we went down a side tunnel it became increasingly warmer until we were sweating. Here the workers were stripped to the waist.

" Some of these people are afraid of silicosis," the Geologist remarked, " but we have plenty of ventilation, and there's actually little danger. Look down there."

We peered through a hole, down into one of the " stopes," a hundred feet below. From these surrounding tunnels the ore was brought up to this level.

As we were coming out the Geologist said, " This is, of course, like any American mine, but let's go down the Hill to see the *kacchas*." They were the men who mined independently on the Company's property, receiving a percentage of the ore as their pay. We found them using the most primitive of methods, watering the crushed ore and letting gravity do most of the work. " Yet their concentrate is almost as high as we get at the mill," the Geologist told us. " We're pretty proud of what we know, but these people have inherited a feel for mining just from working on the same old Hill."

The Acting Manager had invited us to lunch at his house just behind the mine entrance. It was a surprise, in this barren work-place, to find a garden of flowers and vegetables which somehow withstood the cold nights.

The Manager was frankly new to the Potosí mine; he had come down from the States a few months before and had just returned from a tour of the Company's other mine holdings. " What impresses me most," he said, " is the tremendous work yet to be done. It's baffling, and at the same time an enticing opportunity. Do you realize this outfit hasn't even a diamond drill? Up in Arizona or Colorado they'd throw a fit at that situation. And the men! " He laughed. " They baffle me most of all. Maybe I'll get as hard-boiled as the rest of the gang is. But I've seen some of the paintings these people can do. They're good, you know."

He was as much surprised at himself as at the Indians, for he found his sense of order and efficiency fighting against a realization which most business men either never reach, or manage to stifle. He had been to Lake Titicaca on his tour, where there was a project — still only a project — for damming the water and converting it into useful electricity for a large section of Bolivia. Yet at this moment his talk was more of the Aymará Indians he had seen than of this colossal idea. It was a pleasure to talk to him in this enthusiastic stage. Even though we knew that he would knuckle under. Would have to and would want to. Both to hold his job and to fulfill his American sense of efficiency.

We wouldn't have praised him for going native. This was his business; if it was wrong for Americans to exploit a foreign land, whether they owned the operation or merely worked it, then let the Bolivians do the judging: let them throw out every foreigner. Until that time, there was only one way to approach the problem: the American way. . . .

Every evening at five o'clock we were in the habit of going into the hotel bar for a sandwich and a warming wine punch or a *yungeño,* a new cocktail we had just been introduced to,

made of orange juice and *singani*. No one thought of eating dinner before eight or nine.

Tonight we were seated in front of the fire, the only wood fire in Potosí, waiting for Joe Evans, the young civil engineer who most frequently joined us. Now he came striding towards us in his heavy boots.

"Just been having the usual tiff with the office over expenses," he said. "They don't seem to realize I've got to raise my men's pay once in a while."

"How many men have you, Joe?" He was in charge of the all-important water supply, road construction and dam repairs.

"Three hundred right now. Most of them get about fifteen American cents a day. But my masons and carpenters can get a top of four times that much. And the office squawks!"

Although quite the youngest of the Americans, for several years he had bummed around, as he termed it, taking degrees in different western universities and generally leading a typical American life: in the summers he had taken an old Ford and toured the country, paying his way by working in wheat fields or washing dishes in a restaurant. He had come here from Chile, on contract — as all foreigners are in South America. Perhaps he had had a better chance to know the Indians; at least, he had the most sympathy for them and the most information about them — a sequence not purely coincidental.

"How's the water situation?" we asked him. Because of the lack of rain, the mill had almost been forced to shut down.

"I wish the last few generations had kept up what the Spaniards started; then we wouldn't have to worry. We'll get through all right now. But do you know what I'm doing? Repairing dams, trying to get them into half the system they had three hundred years ago. Y'know, the old Viceroy of Alto Peru — that's what they called Bolivia — was no fool. Back in the days when Potosí was a pup he ordered twenty-one lakes to be constructed. He had an ingenious system of putting the same water through a series

of stamping mills that were scaled down the mountainside — the water dropped down a good height each time, you see. . . . Right now I'm doing some work for the city. In exchange for water we're going to furnish them with electricity. So the town won't have to light candles after nine o'clock. We — oh, Lord, look who's going to join us."

A familiar barroom figure was coming towards us, a little unsteadily. He was the Company draftsman. He greeted us in an English accent that belied his twenty years here and in Chile. Almost before he sat down he was bemoaning the luck that had landed him in this "miserable village." "It isn't like the Malay States," he sighed. "Malakka — there's a place. Practically on the equator, y'know. Did you ever have real curry? Spices enough to. . . . A man could do what he pleased out there. Like the time I rode a horse — "

"Please, we've heard that one," Evans said wearily. Even we had heard it, and knew the sequel — how he had become involved in an affair with a native girl of good family, and his friends had had to ship him out here in a hurry.

". . . rode a horse," the Draftsman went on, unheeding, "right into the bar of the English club. Right up the front steps, mind you. On a bet."

Evans paid no attention to him. "You got one of those *alfombras,* by the way?" he asked us. He had advised us to buy the heavier *alfombras,* literally rugs, to replace the blankets we had lost.

"Yes, and had to pay only forty bills apiece." That was less than two and a half dollars at the present exchange rate. They were amusing rather than beautiful, made as they were of every shade of wool the *cholas* use in their skirts, with the characteristic designs of this region: a pink peacock and a pink bird on fields of kelly green surrounded by blues and deep reds and yellows.

The Draftsman heard us talking about native things. "Now take those *tongas,*" he said, alluding to the women's stiff white hats. "Did you ever see anything so ridiculous — "

"Oh, I don't know. Your own Queen Mary wears — "

He heard only the words, "Queen Mary." In the papers today it had been announced that the British liner had finished her maiden voyage to New York without, however, breaking the speed record. Now the Draftsman took it upon his head to defend England's supremacy on the high seas. After a while we had another round of *yungeños* and paid no more attention to him.

". . . You don't run new engines at top speed, that isn't the way to break in a transatlantic liner. . . ."

"I've got seven men," Evans was saying, "seven men, out looking for new workers every day. I think I know half the people in this region. Every time I go back in the mountains to look at the dams I find some fellow who's worked for me. They always ask for a match, which means they want a cigarette. I take along a carton, because a few cigarettes make friends. . . . Those mule trips are the most fun of the whole job. You want to take one. You'll learn things about these people you'll never discover any other way."

"We've been thinking we'd start north from Sucre on mules. They say that's the only way to go."

"It is. Mules are too expensive to buy, but you can probably find an *arriero* going home without any cargo. Now, if you wanted a llama you could buy one for fifty cents."

"Afraid that wouldn't do us any good. Doesn't the story go that they'll lie down if you put the hundred and first pound on their backs?"

"So they say. But I'll tell you something even stranger. D'you know when the Indians' biggest fiesta is? During the mating season of the llamas. The individual herds are so badly inbred, the beasts have lost all urge to reproduce the species. So the Indians have a big fiesta and help them mate."

Marko, the hotel keeper, had joined us. "You're making that up," he laughed.

"I'll swear to it."

Marko could not get over the thought. He sat there,

chuckling to himself. He was a Jugoslavian who had recently come from San Francisco. It had become a joke with us, how many different nationalities we had met. It was really becoming a game.

As we were talking the lights went out. "Must be nine o'clock," Evans said. "Let's go over to my house and eat."

"You don't like my food?" asked Marko.

"It's very good." In fact, Bolivian cooking in the fair-sized towns is much better than most travelers lead you to believe.

". . . and the next trip, you mark my words, the *Queen Mary* is going to take away all the blue ribbons, after her motors. . . ."

Quietly, we sneaked away.

Evans was taking care of the electrical engineer's house while the latter was away on vacation. Down one of the dark streets off the *plaza* we turned in through a heavy door. Inside was a beautiful arcade, two storeys high, about an open *patio*. The house was so large that they used only the upstairs. And for all this they paid just eighteen dollars a month!

It was always a strange sensation to come into one of these American living rooms. And without apologies we dove for a six-weeks-old *New York Times:* the first actual news we had seen since a winter day in Manhattan. Evans automatically began making another batch of cocktails. We protested mildly.

"Hell, I don't see my countrymen very often. Except the same old bunch who're always here. And they stick together as if they were afraid the *cholos* or the townspeople would give them the plague."

As this was our last night in Potosí, we decided it should be a celebration, Bolivian style. But none of us was very impressed with the bottle of wine we had opened. Having tasted the supreme Chilean wine (which is expensive outside its own country), we realized what a poor excuse this was.

"Let's have some *chicha.*" And the servant girl was sent to get some. "Never had it?" Evans asked. "That's the favorite drink of all these mountain people. About as much alcohol as beer has. Made out of corn, you know."

It wasn't bad: tasting like something between a cider and beer; there was just that overtone of sweetness. We were beginning to feel in the mood for a celebration. Evans turned to the servant girl as she waited on us. "Do you know where they're dancing the *cueca* tonight? Will you take us?"

The girl giggled and probably blushed under her dark skin. *Gringos* did not as a rule condescend to ask such questions. But she knew of a place, she thought.

"They all think I'm crazy," Evans laughed, "and probably when the electrician comes back, he'll find I've ruined the morale. But I can't see why I shouldn't treat these people like human beings. They react like ones too, if you give them half a chance."

When the girl had finished washing the dishes she came to us, shawl over her head, and we followed her downstairs and through the cold, shadowed streets. The moon was just coming up. Finally in the poorer section we stopped at a small hotel. There was a *baile* here, the girl said. But the man who opened the door insisted there was no dance. The same thing happened at several houses. "Afraid of us," Evans remarked. "They're not supposed to be dancing this late at night. If we only had time, we could find a policeman who'd take us. Like the old speakeasy days: they always know where to go."

Finally at one house we met a man and woman coming out. The woman wore the high white *tonga,* and the man, a little fellow with his cap pulled down over one ear and wearing a pinch-back suit, recognized the *Señor* Engineer: he was one of our friend's workmen. He would try to find some place, but tomorrow night would be better; he would get up a large dance. No, tonight was the celebration, we insisted; besides, we were leaving tomorrow. Very well, *señores.*

Eventually he found us a place: a little *tienda,* a mere cubbyhole in a house, where they sold beer. Although it was past hours the woman was persuaded to let us in. About the wall were three tables, and on the counter a small victrola. A candle stuck in a bottle gave the only light. We had

THE CUECA

some beer all around. The servant girl, still giggling, left us, and we looked around at our party. Besides ourselves and the workman with his woman, there was a quiet little fellow with a suit and hat too big for him, and the bulky *tienda* keeper, on her head the inevitable *tonga.* Until the music began we did not see an old crone and a little child, huddled in the shadows.

The tune was the one we had heard that night in Nazareno; we all began clapping our hands, one, one-two-three, to the

music. Our little workman, his shoulders hunched up, invited the *tienda* keeper to dance. This would be a farce, she was just under side-show weight: why didn't he dance with his own woman?

But we were quite wrong: she was as light on her feet as any professional dancer. As the music began they faced each other in the narrow space between the tables, each one holding a handkerchief. Slowly they approached, then receded, waving the handkerchiefs very quietly above their heads. Then back to back they circled, receding again. At this point we all began clapping our hands, the dancers stamping their feet in time to the music; then the pause when for an instant they stood still, and again the same dance-pattern. It was as graceful and effortless a folk-dance as we had ever seen. Done so un-selfconsciously: this was the natural dance for them to do, they needed no special costumes, no crowd of people. Just a little beer to wet the tongue. . . .

We all drank again. It was the cheap and malty Potosí beer, not the very good kind from La Paz, and the woman kept opening dark and light, pouring indiscriminately. Everyone was getting his second wind. The other little fellow with the suit too big for him joined with the workman and together they executed a complicated tap dance. The little fellow had been a prisoner, he had told us, and we saw his feet becoming more nimble as he remembered the steps again. These were two unremarkable, ordinary Bolivians, and yet they danced like specialists. "Of course they don't do very much else," Evans observed.

The ex-prisoner came to sit by us. He had bright eyes in an old, worn face, although he was only twenty-two. They had been treated like dogs in the Paraguayan prison. Look at this: he brought out a small notebook. It was a kind of lamentation over his fate, written while he was imprisoned. And yet a eulogy of his country: he was very near crying when he showed it to us. The *tienda* woman cheered us with more beer.

Now the workman's woman came out of her corner. Would the *Señor* Engineer dance with her? Evans looked down at his high laced boots, shrugged, and took out his handkerchief.

She was beautiful in the unspectacular fashion of some of the *chola* women: Spanish blood mixes well with the Indian. Her grave manner and her costume added to the effect. Over an elaborate pink blouse she wore a thin, pale blue *manta,* and over that another pink shawl; her skirt was a soft blue also, and her high white hat had only a thin black ribbon. Without a smile, she executed the dance, seeming to guide our friend. The handkerchief waving might have been silly, or simply boisterous; instead, it lent dignity to the slow cadence and the fast tapping. . . .

A policeman looked in once, but was instantly mollified by a glass of beer. The old crone kept putting on more records, the *tienda* woman was constantly filling our glasses. Presently the workman's head fell onto his chest, and he slept.

We left about three in the morning, our hob-nails echoing across the bare market place. It was winter-cold, and the moonlight lay like frost on the tiled roofs and the cobbled streets.

SUCRE

TALES OF THE CHACO

"The Chaco war isn't over yet, not by a long shot," the Lieutenant was saying. "I'll tell you why. . . ."

We had met him, this soldier of fortune, just as they predicted in Potosí. This evening we were listening to his story in the hotel barroom in Sucre, a morning's ride beyond Potosí. He was in mufti, his long legs stretched out before him, although when he first introduced himself he had been in the smart grey-green officer's uniform with the red infantry bands on his collar. In a way he was rather handsome; certainly he did not look like anyone who had been through months of tropical fighting. Once he was started, the reminiscences flowed smoothly. The casual way he lolled back in his chair while he spoke in a modulated voice, only occasionally raising his eyes and emphasizing some phrase, gave credence to his tale. His Spanish was voluble, but poorly accented. Around us were tables of talking men, and the sound of *cachas,* the dice in leather cups, became a background for this monologue.

"And I'll tell you why it isn't over," the Lieutenant repeated. "Bolivia wants a port on the Pilcomayo — the dry river you passed coming out to Sucre. You know it runs down to the Rio Paraguay in a south-easterly direction, coming out just across the river from Asunción, capital of Paraguay. You didn't go there? Well, it's not so far above Corrientes, where you left the river. . . . If Bolivia had a port, goods could be shipped downstream straight to Buenos Aires and the ocean. A long way around? Yes, but don't forget we have little communication with western Bolivia. Up there they can ship across northern Chile to the free port of Arica, on the Pacific. That's no use to this part of the country. So there's your situation. . . . The Chaco, all the hell-hole that runs down to the Paraguay, was once Bolivia's. We've been pushed back — innumerable fights, of course, through the years. But the *Pilos* — excuse me, that's what we call the Paraguayans, comes from a word meaning 'bare-footed' — the *Pilos* want the oil property in the Chaco. We both want something we haven't got. It's the same situation as in Germany today. Any nation. Naturally there's talk of war. . . . We've got five thousand soldiers on the frontier where we stopped fighting when the armistice was finally signed. But a lot more, too. They're called police, that's the only difference.

"Bolivia lost the war: there's no use making any bones about it. Any officer will tell you that, privately. We were licked by little Paraguay, with a population one-fourth as large as ours. And why? If you'd seen the Chaco you'd know. The orneriest kind of tropical land. Half of it's desert, the other half is jungle. When the *Pilos* had got in behind us and we were making forced marches, we had to drink our urine — that's a fact. . . . We were cut off from communications and the one decent road where they could bring down water. It won't be that way again. . . .

"But our soldiers couldn't stand it. You can't bring a man down from a two-mile altitude and expect him to live in

the jungle. They died like flies from *paludismo,* malaria. We gave them their rations of *coca,* and the poor devils chewed themselves into a kind of stupor. Towards the end of the war they were sending us full-blooded Indians — the ones they could catch; most of them take to the hills when they're wanted. That was plain slaughter, but what were we going to do? They couldn't understand Spanish and they didn't know the muzzle from the butt of a rifle. We just had to keep them going by sticking bayonets in their backs. To make them more afraid of being shot down like dogs by their own countrymen than of charging and maybe getting taken prisoner, if they were lucky. Naturally they tried to desert, by the dozens. We couldn't give them all court martial, we needed them too badly, but every so often we'd take one out and put him up before a firing squad. I was in charge of just one squad like that. God!

" I'm not making out any case for ourselves. But you can ask anyone about the facts. Another thing, we didn't have decent maps or adequate information about our own Chaco. You see, that's always been the Bolivian prison for politicians and the army. When an officer was broken for any reason — and that meant he was in the wrong party — he was sent down there to rot. Particularly if he had revolutionary tendencies. So naturally he wasn't interested in mapping the country. He was just forgotten until his friends came into power. Things like that still happen. Last week I had to take a detail of men and wake up a *deputado* at three in the morning to tell him he had fifteen minutes to dress and pack and get into a *camion* that was waiting to take him out of town. That was a nasty job for me because I'd been — well, paying attention, shall we say, to his daughter. He took it philosophically enough. If his side ever comes out on top again, God help the man who issued the order.

" Put together the bad climate and the lack of information, and then add some poor examples of officers. It was better towards the end, the War Office finally got wind of the

trouble. But you can't run a regiment when your superior officers have their women and their champagne. Particularly when the men know about it — how could they help hearing? — and are put on half-rations. They remember those things. . . . Bolivia's played out right now, and sick and tired of war. Lord, I'd never go through it again, I know that much. You don't feel like a hero, you're just numb. Numb and full of a lot of nasty memories. They say the World War was just the same. But it wasn't. It was a different kind of hell. I'd rather wallow in a trenchful of mud than broil under a tropical sun.

" And the usual story of graft, of course. You're probably fed up with all the stories about grafting politicians in every South American country. My answer to that one is, I've seen graft in a few foreign capitals too. . . . Incidentally, they had me up on that charge. My Major wanted me to sign a ration order for thirty-five hundred men when we had only eight hundred. The rest were coming up, he said. That was supposed to ease my conscience. I guess I was a little blunt. Anyway, he pinned it on me. Fortunately I had some decent friends on the staff. . . .

" That leaves a bad taste in your mouth. Even more than some of the rest, which was — well, in the heat of battle men do some horrifying things. Once we came into a town that the *Pilos* had been attacking. Everyone had gone berserk. They thought their lives were over, so the bars were down. Some of the soldiers heard that the friars had broken into a convent and were raping the nuns. They killed off every monk they could lay their hands on, then did the same thing. . . . Hysteria, that's all. It was the same thing on both sides, and I don't blame anyone. I sit here in this room and say these things in cold blood, and it sounds worse, naturally. Sometimes we'd come up to our front line and find they'd crucified our men with bayonets. They had — but I won't go into details. It made our men see red, they did the same thing, and — well. . . .

"There were two other foreigners on our side, airmen. Tony was caught two days before the truce. Shot down and pretty badly smashed or they'd never have taken him alive; I know him too well. They were going to shoot him on the spot, but a German in command was smart. He ordered Tony sent down to Asunción to be paraded through the streets. To show the people that Bolivia employed mercenaries.

"I honestly think we were too lenient ourselves. If you're in the midst of a war, who's going to follow the rules? I never could understand two countries preserving certain niceties. Cut them out and war would be abolished a lot sooner.

"On the other hand, on our side there were incidents we naturally kept out of the papers. There was a nun in Santa Cruz, the big town north and east of here, whom they had to shoot. Found guilty of espionage. And even right here in Sucre. Five monks were operating a radio station, giving away secrets. We just quietly took them out before dawn and shot them, then sent the firing squad so far up the line that they'd probably never come back to tell the tale.

"I suppose you've seen the prisoners going back home. Reason there were so many taken on both sides was that they were cut off from the rest. We weren't going to shoot them. A small patrol, yes. But not eight thousand prisoners, especially when we had plenty of our own in Paraguay. . . . They say a hundred and twenty thousand of our men were killed. Who knows? I do know they took out twenty thousand wounded by plane. Most of them would have died otherwise. And they'd send them back into line half-cured, we needed men so.

"You can't expect a man to march twenty-five kilometers a day with an open wound on his leg. . . .

"They hospitalized me once, in Santa Cruz. Ever read Hemingway's *Farewell to Arms?* After the first few days it was like that. Pleasant. A nice sunny *patio* to look out on — it's not too hot or too cold there. I didn't even mind

the dirty probes they used on me, because there was plenty of good American whisky to make me forget about possible infection. And nurses: Santa Cruz is noted for its beautiful women, you've heard. No exaggeration. And they'd come with breakfast, or tuck you in at night — well, you say you've read Hemingway. . . .

" That was about the only pleasant interlude to remember. On the retreats it was plain hell. Through the hot desert, no water. Then we'd come to a town — the *Pilos* were behind us. If we took it, we went crazy. We didn't know whether we were going to get out of that hole and we didn't care. There wasn't any use trying to hold the men back. We took what we could get. Break into a store and take the first liquid they had. Bust off the tops of the bottles, we couldn't wait to open them. . . . Crazy. No better than a bunch of animals. . . . That's about all I remember. A nice piece to add onto your life, eh? "

And that was all the Lieutenant got out of the Chaco. That, and his " trophies." . . .

Sucre lies at the head of a pleasant valley, a green tip to the brown mountains which stretch east from Potosí. There among the red-tiled roofs of the *fincas,* or farms, runs a little stream edged with giant eucalyptus trees and surrounded by royal palms and dark, needle-like cypress.

We first saw this valley as we came from Potosí, riding by on our little *auto-carril,* an automobile bus with railroad wheels. The scene of this fertility, and of a strange orange-colored mansion with Moorish turrets and medieval battlements, remained in our minds. This morning we decide to hire a car and examine these places close at hand.

A drop of four thousand feet from the altitude of Potosí has brought us again into the sub-tropics. Along this road we look down upon the richness of vineyards and fields enclosed by the mountains. The Indians who drive their burros out of our way wear a different costume: broad, natural-colored homespun trousers to the knees, and a kind of hat which at first looks like a football headgear; more accurately, it is an exact duplicate, in leather, of the helmet the Spaniards wore four centuries ago. . . .

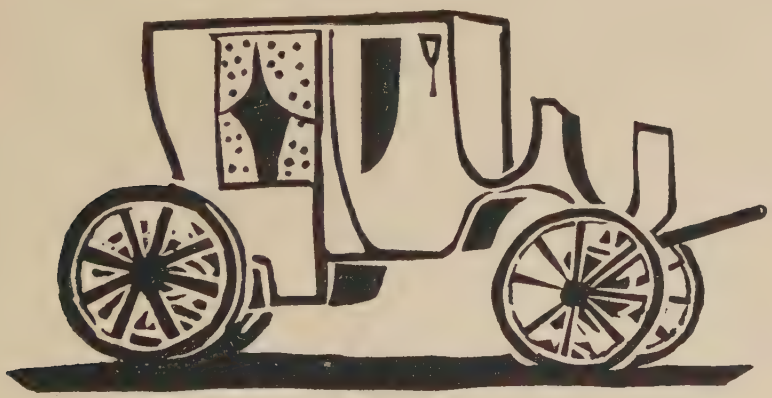
At one of the estates we drive up to the gate and ask permission to see the grounds. The caretaker is most obliging. The family have gone to Buenos Aires for the winter season, the place is not what it will be again in the rainy-time, but he will show us. As we walk along the irrigation canal, through orchards and gardens, scuffing the golden leaves, we feel the melancholy air of early autumn. Yet what a place it must be when all the fruits are ripe: when these trees hold their peaches and pomegranates, apricots and plums and limes and tangerines and apples, and even walnuts; when the grapes are ripe and lustrous on the vines, and the rose garden is in full bloom, instead of sparsely dotted with flowers as it is now. We have a new understanding of Sucre. The caretaker says that there are many wealthy families who come here during the season. Now they are in town, or in the capitals — preferably, foreign.

The driver suggests on the way back that we stop at La Glorieta, which turns out to be the rococo palace we had noticed from the *auto-carril*. It is without doubt an architectural monstrosity, its only rivals perhaps being the Victorian chateaux built in Newport during the gilded age. A minaret arises above the orange bulk of the palace, which is a lacework of Moorish arches and brilliant stained glass. There is another turret with a small open tea-house at the top, and beside the house proper, half a dozen stables with designs of riding crops and jockeys' caps above the doors. Now, they are full of old farm equipment, and one milk cow. That note of decay sets the tone for the whole place and its surrounding grounds. The little gardens with their artificial lakes and romantic plaster castles and fountains are dry and unkempt. A toy railroad has been partially torn up. The great palms have outgrown their beauty and now spread their fronds across the paths. At the river bank, built up with masonry, there is a rusty ship's gangplank. Across the bridge, another neglected garden and, in the midst, two statues, one of a man and the other of a woman, on horseback.

In the wrought-iron gate is the name, Francisco Arganadona: the driver can only say that this was the home of La Princesa de Sucre. Who was she? What happened? Atrocious as the architecture is, we can easily imagine the place in its prime. At a garden party, say, when barges came down the river and ladies in Eugénie hats and sweeping skirts with bustles paraded under these palms, among bright flowers, and gentlemen still wore top hats and frock coats. That must have been the Princess, riding side-saddle on the plaster horse. An answer to our questions would go far to reveal Sucre. . . .

Back in the *plaza* the band is playing, the people walking round and round in the immemorial custom of all Latin America. The balcony of our spacious hotel room on the corner looks down on this scene and across at the great government building and at the cathedral, newly painted like a vast red and white checkerboard. Its interior belies this

hideous treatment: subdued in tone, only the frieze and cornices gilded, and the baldachin — the free-standing altar beneath the crossing, typical of ecclesiastical architecture in Bolivia. Behind the altar, seated in their high carved seats, are the priests of the bishopric in their purple robes, reading from their old quartos. A little man had asked us if we wanted to see the painting by Murillo, the great Spanish artist of the seventeenth century. Doubting that a Murillo would be here, we went to see: a great oval painting of the martyrdom of San Bartolomeo; the Saint tied to a tree, two soldiers standing by, another stripping the skin from his right arm, revealing to the elbow only bloody muscle. In the background a landscape, and overhead the Saint's vision of heaven, with cherubim looking down. Without questioning the authenticity of the picture we tipped the old man. He disappeared immediately, and as we came around to the side entrance, he was already receiving from a little boy two bottles of *chicha!*



In the *plaza* we presently come upon the Lieutenant, in full uniform this morning. As we stroll round and round he speaks to many of the people — especially all the beautiful girls, with whom he seems on very good terms. "Sucre still preserves her eighteenth-century manners," he remarks. "Everything is form and etiquette — in appearance, at least. I have to watch myself constantly not to make some blunder."

But we are eager to find out what he knows about the Princess and her rococo palace.

He smiles. "That's right in keeping with the romantic aspect of this town. To understand, you've got to remember how old this town is — not so much older than Potosí, it's true, but with an entirely different kind of history. The swashbuckling adventurers came here when they turned gentlemen — if ever. It was the seat of the Royal Audiencia of Charcas, back in the Spanish viceroy days — an immense area. The Jesuits came in and established the University of Chuquisaca: that was the name of the town then, you know, and is what they still call the state. In any history you'll read that the University was considered the intellectual center of South America during the colonial days.

"Well, that was the start. At the end of Bolivia's War of Independence the Colombian General Sucre became president, and this was naturally made the capital. It still is, legally. But of course the government is all in La Paz now.

"Sometime after the middle of the last century the Princess came on the scene. Her maiden name was Urioste and Francisco Arganadona wanted her. He was a *nouveau riche;* his father had been an onion peddler in Santa Cruz, but he'd made millions in the *Cerro Rico.* All his money must have attracted the Princess — that was an ecclesiastical title he bought for her by his great donations to the church. She put on a show, all right. Your hotel used to be her town house, and in the barroom where we were the other night she used to hold audience every Sunday — the populace at large from two to four, the wealthy and titled from then till six.

And she drove through the streets, mind you, in a *glass coach.* That's suggestive enough of the grandeur, don't you think? "

He excused himself a moment while he went to speak to a good-looking girl. " One of the Uriostes," he explained as we resumed our walking. " There are four or five families who won't speak to one another now, since the Princess died. Her will's still in chancery. You know the squabbles that means. I keep friendly with them all, but if I borrow a horse from one of them the next day the other families all ask me why I didn't borrow a good horse, from them. The old palace you saw is Roberto Urioste's — the only property that's clearly willed to anyone. He's a decent chap, likes his liquor a bit too much perhaps, and too poor to keep up an establishment of that order. It has a glamor about it, eh? By God, I'd like to have lived here in the old days!

" I still catch glimpses of it, though. In the duels, for example. No one is ever badly hurt, but it's all very formal. I was once asked to be a second. We went out to the *Mesa Grande,* the traditional duelling ground outside of town. Of course it was just after dawn, and they had a surgeon, a stretcher and all the rest. At the time I didn't realize what a farce it was. All of us who were attending solemnly swore that we would take the quarrel on our own shoulders, and the referee made the usual gesture of reconciliation. Well, they paced off, turned and fired — not exactly into the air, but no one was hurt. I took them both to my apartment and they got drunk together. . . . Still, it's not so funny when you're challenged to a duel. Happened to me once. An army man has to get permission from the General Staff to fight a duel; he's got to ask, or else he might as well hand in his commission. I didn't have to go that far. If I had ever needed any practice in marksmanship, I got it down in the Chaco. So I displayed a little target practice where my challenger could watch. The next day I received a profuse apology. He was afraid I wouldn't live up to the etiquette of such matters.

" It's the same with these girls. All very prim and proper

at dances, and at first you think they're the stickiest females alive. But get them out from under the eyes of their *dueñas* — which reminds me," he said, looking at his wrist watch, "that I have an engagement with one very shortly."

"We've got to go look for mules, anyway. Not quite as pleasant a task!"

"Have you got your *permiso* from the Colonel yet?"

We had made the mistake of asking the Chief of Army Transports for help in finding mules or some means of transportation to the north. All that we had obtained from him was an order not to leave Sucre until he communicated with La Paz: a bit of red tape we could have avoided.

But our release had been granted yesterday, and we were just about to leave the Lieutenant when —

Out of nowhere came a sound like a sheet of metal being torn in two. Just coming over the house tops on the far side of the *plaza* was a plane, so low that we could plainly see the aviator. We ducked instinctively as he seared the tree tops and miraculously rose high enough to miss the light wires and the roof of our hotel. We felt weak all over.

"They've just started an air school here, we'll be having that right along now."

"An American army man would be grounded in two minutes if he did a trick like that."

"It's a new American plane, you can be thankful for that, or he'd never have pulled it up. They'll pass a law after one buries its nose in the garden here."

"Well, that's a common practice in any country."

"Right. See you tonight in the bar."

We started off in search of mules. This had begun several days before, with no results. Even in a smallish town like Sucre, where every day we saw dozens of burros and mules and their drivers on the streets, it was extremely difficult to ferret them out, and once found, to discover a man who was going far enough north without a load.

In the outskirts of town and about the market, we eventually learned, there were *tambos,* the Quechua word for inn, where the *arrieros* stayed and stabled their mules. Usually we found only an old woman and the inevitable answer, " *No hay mulas este día, señores* — no mules today." We decided to try the market, where every incoming cargo train must pay customs before selling its wares.

When we arrived the small market was in an uproar. Around the wall of the customs office were dozens of women, all screaming and waving bills in the air: they were asking to be allowed a share in the rice that had just come in. A few brown and white homespun bags were standing about the weighing scale: these bags are the most beautiful examples of weaving, to our minds, that Bolivia has to offer. But no *arriero* will part with one. . . . Presently the women were satisfied. A man collected their money, seeming to take down none of their names, and brought forth a bag. They gathered around, their black hair and black shawls shining in the sun.

Around the edge of the market were Indian women selling *coca.* An Indian with the Spanish headgear and a short pigtail would come up, buy a few grams, and go off. Now and then a new train arrived, but always they were burros which were too small for any but a lightweight to ride. We were about to give up in despair when a woman came up to us. We are looking for mules?

She was not dressed in *cholo* costume, and her air was altogether businesslike. It seemed her mules had come in with the rice and were soon going back to Aiquile, a town north of here. If we would pay her a small deposit she would see that we had two mules; otherwise, perhaps she might find some cargo going back.

Was she certain the mules are going soon?

" *Sí, seguramente, señores. Mañana en la mañana.*" Absolutely, she assured us. Tomorrow morning.

We gave her the deposit and went out to buy some food. . . .

Mañana en la mañana: here it is the evening of *mañana,* and we have been told the same old story: *Espere, señores, espere.* There is a long explanation that goes with it, no doubt quite true and imperative, but the result is the same. Now we have been told that we shall leave tonight, about two, when the moon is well up.

Nevertheless, it is another opportunity to sit around the bar with the Lieutenant and hear more tales. He is generally secretive about his past, but concerning Bolivia he is always voluble. He is full of optimism about the new military government of Colonel Toro. " It's lasted three weeks now," he remarks, as if this were something of an accomplishment in itself. " We all think it's come to stay. You know, the war was without doubt the strangest and most useless in history

—if you can call one war any more useless than the next. Yet something may come out of it. If nothing else, it's coalesced public opinion. The whole of Bolivia is composed of ex-soldiers, don't forget that, or families who've seen some of their men brought back dead. They're all fed up with the government that ran the war. Same thing in Paraguay.

"An army backing means the country's backing right now. We all knew the revolution was coming, of course. Had our field pieces ready in case anything happened. Before that, a few of Toro's friends had canvassed the whole army. The soldiers are behind him, either because they fear him, love him or respect him. What's the essential difference? Toro's an active young man. He has socialist ideas, and he's going to soak the rich and the big mining industries with heavy taxes—you'll see."

"And all the time with one eye on the Chaco again?" we interrupt.

"Of course. When the time's ripe. He asked every officer if he was ready to fight again. If not, get out."

"And what about yourself?"

"The same question when I renewed my commission." He winks at us. "But when the time comes, I'm through. Once is enough for me in that hell-hole." He springs up, catching sight of a figure at the door with whom he shakes hands, then pats on the back in the usual Bolivian salutation. He presents his friend.

"This is Nick. He can tell you more about the country than I can."

We have been considering going to bed for a few hours before meeting the mule train at two o'clock. But the temptation to hear what a Bolivian thinks of his own country is too appealing. We order more beer, which he insists upon buying. He is a graduate of Harvard and the owner of large tracts of land and a *finca* near Tarabuco, a town many kilometers west. Obviously he is well off, an educated man who has traveled enough to have a perspective on the present scene.

"The Lieutenant has been talking war; I know him," he begins. He talks in a rapid, excited fashion. "That is the trouble, I always hear war when I come in from my *finca.* I hate Sucre, anyway. Everyone knows what I thought of the war, and I've told the government men that to their faces. They talk politics, politics. I do not indulge in my countrymen's pastime. You are being fools, I tell them. Because you must look at the economic side. And they do not.

"I have been all over your United States. After I finished at Harvard — first I went to Cornell and took agriculture, then economics and business administration in Cambridge — after that, I studied your factories. Textile mills in New England and the Carolinas. I have spent many weeks in Chicago, and in the far west. I can tell you what great industry means" — he is very earnest — "and I realize that is what it takes to make a great country. For myself, I do not care. I have my *finca,* and I raise my peaches and apples and wheat. Hogs, too, and for a sideline I have a small cement factory. Chiefly, however, it is barley for the big brewery in La Paz. That is enough for me, I am not thinking selfishly. . . ."

"What would be your solution, then?" we ask.

"Solution? Let me tell you something. Bolivia is the Poland of South America. Think what that means. She has been harassed on all sides until she has no outlet of her own. At present all she has is tin. What happens this morning? The price of tin drops because of the German and French strikes. The factories cannot use tin, the brokers are afraid — or clever enough to make that an excuse, perhaps. That fact, and the avowed socialistic policies of the *junta* in La Paz. Very well. We are dependent, we are down on our knees. With the debts, too, of this war. And with our population decreased. . . ."

"And so — ?"

"So — I say there is only one solution. Bolivia should be

carved up among all the surrounding countries — a piece to Chile, to Peru, to Brazil and to Argentina! "

For a moment we are a little aghast at this seeming lack of patriotism. We ask him to explain himself.

" I mean this. We should give ourselves to these countries. We have no natural borders, we are not self-sufficient " — he laughs at the thought — " and we are powerless. You are astonished, because you have not suffered as I have. I am a Bolivian. I am very proud that I was born here. But I know what is best for my country. I know that the people would be better off. Politics — bah! A country must be established along economic lines. Provided there are not conflicting races within. And how are we different from the other Spanish-speaking countries? Our Indians speak Quechua and Aymará, the same as in Peru. In the Chaco they are Chiriguanos and Guaranayos — members of the Guaraní, like the Paraguayans. And so I say, I am willing to see Bolivia dissolve."

We are all silent for a moment. Nick has said the last word, there is very little left even to argue about. We finish our beer and say good-night.

As we lie down in our clothes we hear the policemen's whistles, one man signalling to the next, who answers and passes on the word that all is quiet, until the sound becomes faint in the distant corners of the town. In such a way new ideas spread. Except that then the sound is always louder as it is repeated.

MULE TRIP

Two o'clock: in the deathlike stillness, more asleep than awake, we steal down into the cold night with its baleful moon. Our feet echo loudly in the quiet streets past the shuttered stores. At the *aduana* door, not a sound or a light. For a moment before knocking we hesitate. Without speaking, we know what we are both thinking: that we are about to lose ourselves in mountains of which few people have even heard. About to cut ourselves off from the rest of the world not so much by space as by time. . . .

Certainly we must have awakened the whole town before a sleepy Indian opens the door to us. Yes, the mule driver is here: he points to a room across the courtyard and we pound upon another door.

There are mutterings in Quechua, and it opens. Someone strikes a match, revealing among a dozen stinking cow hides the tousled head of the mule-mistress and a fellow with a large, floppy hat.

"*Espere, señores.* Lie down for a little while. The moon is too weak to start now."

Resignedly we unfold our blankets and lie down upon the hard clay floor. Quietness falls again. It is too cold to leave the door open, and with our noses next to the hides the stench is terrific. There is also just a suggestion of a louse. . . .

It is not very good sleeping, and hopefully we hear every early morning sound: a cock crowing, passing the call on, like the policemen and their whistles. The hollow *clock-clock* of burro hoofs as the animals come in — but not our burros. . . .

By five-thirty the mule driver begins to look alive, and presently goes out. The woman yawns, lights a candle, and pulls on an extra dress. The man comes back with coffee for all of us.

Out in the street there is little movement: a black-ponchoed group of Indians huddles silently around a street brazier. In a *tienda* we purchase a few cents' worth of chocolate and a can of salmon. Later we wonder why we did not buy a great deal more. Down the street, at the *tambo,* they are saddling the mulēs now. Our train, we discover, consists of four burros, eleven mules, and one lonely, mangy horse with a bell about its neck. The mule driver is fastening the packs with the help of two Indians, one a hollow-cheeked and bearded man who wears a bright red poncho and a stiff white sombrero; the other a young boy, hardly sixteen, wearing beneath his brown poncho a tattered purple suit. All have sandals on their feet.

The sun has taken the edge off the coldness, and people are moving about the streets by the time we start our solemn departure. We do not mount yet, but walk along with the mule-mistress, who is seeing that we are safely on our way. The road winds steeply out of town and in a moment we are above Sucre, looking down on the close-fitting pattern of red tiles, each gable with its white accent of plaster, the uniformity broken only by the grey mansard roof of a government building and by the cathedral tower. Now we perceive

the setting of the city: on a ridge, yet all around are mountains, two cone-like ones on the left against which stand the blue walls of the religious college, overlooking Sucre. Quickly we leave the town behind and start on our dusty trail towards the lonely mountains. Already the Indians are shouting "*mu—la!*" or "*burr-ro!*" at the laggards. Although they prefer to walk awhile, they insist we try the saddles they have fixed for us: affairs made of our blankets tied on with a cinch strap. No unnecessary frills or furbelows —no stirrups, no bridles, nothing else. When we stretch out our long legs they nearly reach the ground, although our animals are much larger than the tiny burros.

Now the trail winds downward and the sun, a moment before so welcome, begins to be uncomfortable. The mules plod along, dust rising in great clouds behind them, filling the air, covering us with grey. We have entered a narrow rocky pass which descends into a valley, the mules skidding over the rough cobblestones as we come into a little hamlet where eucalyptus trees relieve the yellow monotony of the mountain landscape. At the bottom there is a stream which the thirsty sun has reduced to the merest trickle.

But this smooth going does not last; presently we are steeply ascending a mountain, clinging to the animals' manes. Above us is a file of llamas, only their long necks showing from this angle so that they resemble a row of snakes curiously peering over a ledge. Just at the summit we catch up with them, outlined against the hot blue sky, their Indian drivers whistling at them. They prick up their ears and when they see us, stare with their big brown eyes, jerking their heads from side to side, wriggling their black noses disdainfully. Yet llamas never achieve dignity or sophistication: always you feel an imbecile quality about them. Their small heads and the silly pantaloon effect of their hind legs and curling, uplifted tails always contradict the dowager-expression they try to give you.

From here on, llama trains are common —some large,

some small, every color, and always driven by an Indian who is resigned to the slow pace, like a guide with tourists he cannot hurry. Llamas are not designed for running: when they do run their necks wobble disjointedly like those of ostriches.

Now we are winding along a yellow ridge towards a valley that lies, deep-cut, between two mountain ranges. This kind of country has its compensations, dry and burned as it is. The planes are simplified, the ridges, the mountains and valleys, assume their true relations, freed of detail. Once more we wind down, over a trail powdered into dust. A train of burros passes us loaded with oranges neatly packed in grass.

And at last we have come to the Rio Chico, a dry and gravelly river bottom, until from a side valley a clear mountain stream comes out to join us. One of the men says we shall follow this till late tomorrow. Late tomorrow: that seems a long way off.

Yet at least we shall be glad of the water, for the heat is intense now and the sun glares up from the white road which is cushioned with six inches of the choking dust. Already our legs are chafed from rubbing against the blankets, and aching because there are no stirrups to ease the strain. The stop for lunch, all too short, is only momentary relief. Greedily we have eaten nearly all the food supply: if we had only known. . . .

Jogging through the hot afternoon we try all manner of grotesque side-saddle positions in an attempt to keep some of the skin still on our legs. Dust and heat, dust and heat; every rock baked to cooking temperature in this valley-oven. So that we cannot believe our eyes when around a bend we come upon a brilliant patch of green: light emerald of sugar cane and the deeper, softer color of banana leaves set against the grey expanse of rocky, cactus-covered mountainside.

All afternoon there are variations on this theme. Wherever the narrow river bottom spreads out, or where a rock ledge has caught some earth, there will be this bright but

cooling spot of green, defying the white dust-clouds which hot gusts of air force down the canyon. Soothing and yet tantalizing: we would give anything to stop a moment, to cease this endless camel-motion of our plodding mules. To bathe in a stream — the mere thought is torture. But we must get on to Chuquichuqui, where we shall spend the night. . . .

At dusk, the day's ride finally over, we present an amusing scene. The five of us beneath a tree, all gazing eagerly into its branches at the chickens roosting there. Dickinson, as a veteran poultry fancier, selects the choicest pair, and a small boy with great agility manages to grab one of them by the legs. The other, suddenly aware of its fate, flies squawking into the bushes, whence we finally extract it after a hard chase. Solemnly each of us feels the breast-bones, and the owner agrees to part with his birds for ten American cents apiece.

In the growing darkness we squat about the campfire

busily plucking our suppers. The mule driver with the red poncho officiates, keeping the blaze going and watching the boiling kettle, into which we pop the birds when they are sufficiently naked; a few feathers more or less do not matter.

And now we can lie back on the saddle blankets, away from the firelight, letting the cook do the work while the rest of us pass around the bottle of *singani* we have brought along. Laughing and joking. Forgetting the happenings of the day which are least pleasant to remember — the heat, the dust, the chafing, the tired muscles. Remembering only the fine mountain forms, and the sight at sunset as we dropped down into a green oasis with its dark lane, along the stream where the flower odors were strong as perfume. Through a great orange grove, and yet not feeling covetous, for we were near the end. Beyond the last thatched hut of this little settlement we had found our spot by the river. Now it did not matter that the mules had had to be unloaded first so that they could roll luxuriously in the dust, and then be served with the cornstalks which the men brought for them.

After all, this is a fine life, the day was worth it. Relaxing here under the stars, the odor of cooking in our nostrils every time the Indian lifts the pot lid to add a little onion or stab gently with his knife. Will it never be ready? When the cook says the word, we stand on no ceremony. "Here: hold on, now" — and we rip one poor bird down the middle. Our fingers do the rest.

Chicken has never tasted so good; even discounting our ravenous hunger we can call the Indian a genius. And after the last bones are picked clean there is real chicken broth, and toasted wheat kernels, a food we vow we shall introduce into the States.

Just as we are about to curl up in our blankets, a young boy appears and asks if we would like to buy some fresh sausage. Everybody is too sleepy and replete at the moment, but Dickinson, remembering there will be very little food

for lunch tomorrow, sacrifices his sleep to the common cause.

This is no shy little Indian. Where are you from? he asks. Are you Chileans? What is your name? All the way down the trail which is alternately bright and dark as trees shut out the starlight. At the house an old woman squats in the doorway. Lighting a candle, she brings out the scales and expertly hacks off half a *kilo* of warm meat. All for six cents.

When Dickinson returns, the embers of the campfire faintly outline four sleeping bodies. It is nine o'clock.

And at midnight we start another day. It is bitter cold, there is ice in the stream, and we hug the tiny fire while the muleteers round up the animals. The hot brown water they call coffee is very welcome. Across the valley floor now lies the shadow of the mountain, cast by a rising moon, and by its light we can make out the men reloading the tired mules. But something is wrong. After a great deal of talk in Quechua, it develops that one mule is missing. Probably it has headed on up the trail, they decide, so we will go on.

Just go on: that is the theme song for the next eighteen hours. Eighteen consecutive hours on or off a mule, in a climate that ranges every day from below freezing to over ninety. Now as we set out it is almost unbearable, swaying along on the mules, splashing back and forth across the stream, trying vainly to keep our hands from freezing, to keep the icy air from rushing up our trouser legs. Bleak and miserable, with no way to restore circulation, with the skin on our legs gradually scraping off. And yet in a few hours we know it will be blazing hot — that is the irony of it. Now heat is something blessed, and when the mule drivers use a loosened pack as an excuse to stop and light a fire, we cannot suppress a cheer.

Even the Indians are frozen after four hours of this night riding. They hold their ponchos out over the flame made from dried thorn bushes, letting the hot air rush up inside to warm their bodies. Unmindful of a scorching we kneel

before the fire while our backs still twitch with the cold. Wishing that we had something more to wear: even the Indians' knitted helmets, like aviators' caps, would be a help.

If anything, it is worse when the time comes to desert the fire. At last by walking we restore the circulation, though at every fording of the stream we must wade now — for our mules have run ahead. Our feet become numb and sore, caked in dust one moment, washed in ice water the next. Gradually the sky grows lighter and we seem to come out of a voyage through nothingness into a valley bright with red rock cliffs and green trees. By sprinting, we have managed to catch up with our mules, but we prefer to walk still, leading them until we come to a ford, then throwing ourselves across the saddles, sidewise, as the Indians do. We just go on, and on. . . .

Eleven o'clock: ten hours since we started, and still nothing to eat. Riding side-saddle now to ease the sore spots, heat rising in great waves from the dusty trail, our faces covered with handkerchiefs, sweat soaking through our shirts, pour-

ing down under our hats. The stream is much larger now, rushing along below us as we skirt a cliff before dropping down to another *finca* with its orange groves.

It has a once-better-days air about it, with its great colonnaded house towering above the orange trees. When we ask for food, it is again "*No hay, señores.*" But perhaps we can buy some oranges at the house. Dickinson goes to see, while we start on. For a long time he does not come. When he does catch up, bearing a dozen oranges wrapped up in his red handkerchief, Bowman smells a rat: he looks too well satisfied. Yes, they have given him coffee and sweet rolls while the old lady, frightened that there is a new revolution going on, nervously asks questions about the outside world.

All this time we have seen no signs of the lost mule, so one of the mule drivers must go back to look for it. The animal would not have crossed the bridge we are approaching. On the other side begins the State of Cochabamba, and a marvelously lush-green section of the valley, bright with sugar cane fields in the midst of which stands one enormous tree. One of the Indians calls it a *goma,* which means rubber: there is none like it in this whole region, he says.

Now we have seen the last of the Rio Chico. Just before stopping for lunch we turn off into a side valley and start upstream along a smaller river. Something has happened to the sausage Dickinson bought — that is a tragedy. So the Indian makes a bowl of soup from farina and a bit of onion. The mules spread out along the stream, and calculating a good half hour for the roundup, we steal away to the stream and lie in the cool water.

But it is very bad to bathe, they tell us; we are going to be sick. Certainly they look as if they had been practicing what they preach. In any event, it has done no good, for in five minutes we are again baked, broiled and fried in one, with a covering of grey silt over us. What is far worse, we have left the stream. All afternoon it grows more and more

hot. There are no trees but the organ cactus and the mesquite, and no water. The last of the oranges gives very temporary relief, leaving throat and lips burned and parched. Late in the afternoon we come upon the first signs of habitation — a lonely thatched hut beside a tree. May we have a drink? Reluctantly a woman brings us a gourd half-filled with water, bugs and miscellaneous additions. Yes, we drink it. And later pass the pig-lined puddle of a reservoir. . . .

It is only a league now to Quiroga, where we shall stop for the night. Veterans as they are, the two muleteers are limping, too chafed to ride. The two of us stagger along as a rear guard, the shirts on our backs almost too hot to touch, our eyes red with dust. Wondering if this trek, now in its seventeenth hour, will ever end. We keep asking if there will soon be water, and the Indians can only say that there used to be a trickle along here — it seems to have dried up. But at last it comes, an infinitesimal ribbon lost among the rocks, and we lap it up.

This seems to be a signal for the renewal of life: the country grows suddenly greener and we pass several houses, wondering if we should stop now and purchase a chicken. There is even a cow or two; tonight we shall have milk. And vegetables and fruit and eggs. Planning our meal, we step along more cheerfully now upon our blisters.

Until we come to a row of abandoned mud huts: Quiroga. The muleteer speaks to the last surviving citizen, who delivers the *No hay* ultimatum in a sing-song voice. It seems there is no mule fodder here, not to speak of human fodder. This is the last village we shall touch, but certainly one of the houses ahead will have something.

And so we begin the eighteenth hour, and finish it in a barnyard where two Indians are grinding up a pathetic handful of corn, all they have for their evening meal. Yes, we may sleep here and feed the mules; but we shall have to go elsewhere for our own supper.

At the second house to which we apply there are several ducks and chickens. Yet the woman refuses to sell; money means nothing in these lost valleys. Nor will another woman farther on part with even one of her scrawny potatoes. Still a fourth place has a herd of goats; but they are giving no milk. Over and over again this same theme song, *No hay.* We forget its implications, its meaning for Bolivia, we are

so starved ourselves. Even the muleteer is surprised. " These are poor people," he says, " but we did not think there would be *nothing.*" Even his Quechua has not helped him to persuade them.

So, in the rapidly growing coldness we build a candle-sized fire and stew up a weak, watery soup of farina, munching the last wheat kernels with it. A freezing wind is whipping up the valley, and we huddle dejectedly by the fire. This is not like last night and there is no better outlook for tomorrow. Silently the Indians heap the packs in a pile, and taking a couple of saddle blankets we curl up on the lee side to try sleeping on empty stomachs.

Suddenly there is a grinding, crashing sound which issues from Dickinson. He sits up, spitting out something. "Damn," he mutters, "I thought I found a piece of chocolate in my pocket, but it was that mining sample they gave us in Potosí."

The next day — but it was nothing except a repetition of mountains and valleys which now failed to interest us. Late in the afternoon, still without food, we dragged into Aiquile, terminus of our mule trip for the present. One thing we shall not forget: after the bare mountains and the sloping fields, burned bright yellow, again the welcome view of green eucalyptus. This time hugging the towers of a church. One is never quite the same after such an experience; we were now too poignantly aware of what the "fundamentals of life" means. . . .

Some towns are quaint and picturesque. Aiquile is neither, yet it has certain elements unlike any other town we had seen. Elements which define its character, giving it a pleasant distinction which its location here on the Cochabamba-Santa Cruz road hardly warrants.

Things easy to remember — not true of all towns in Bolivia or in any other country. Such as looking into the church our first night here and seeing the hundreds of candles on the altar, a bright spot that hardly reached the black crowd of figures in the nave. And the priest raising a cloud of smoke as he swung the incense holder back and forth; and the wheezy organ that tried to follow the chanting. . . . Coming

out into the *plaza* to discover that the tin street lamps held candles: a whole town lit by candlelight. . . . Our hotel, where room and board costs sixteen cents a day: a crumbling place where the town's important men gather to drink *chicha* in the afternoons. . . . Elements like the rotting balconies of the older houses, and the piles of blankets in the corners of every front room; seldom for sale, although Bowman finally manages to buy one with purple stripes on a white background. . . . Little tables, covered with sweets and flies, filling all the doorways, and the old women watching them who liked to talk with us about the States. And in the houses — most of them — the huge piles of corn, unshelled, which later would be made into *chicha.* An extraordinary process, the old women chewing the kernels and spitting them into a bowl: by this slightly nauseating method certain bacteria are provided necessary to fermentation. . . . Elements to remember, like the great colonnaded market where perhaps a dozen women sit forlornly around the cloisters. But it can be a more lively place, and the hotel at night often resounds with a good drunk, the men vying with one another to see who can demonstrate the best falsetto. . . . And strangest element of all, the *excusado,* the bathroom, a noble pig-pen out in back — with pigs. . . .

Three long days on muleback had not completely daunted us. The valleys around Aiquile looked inviting; we decided to explore a little farther, keeping on the main road and stopping at a village a few leagues north. Almost as soon as we announced our intention to the hotel keeper, the whole

village was aware of our desire to hire mules. One old man approached us in the *plaza*. Yes, he had animals; and for half an hour we argued the price, at last coming to an agreement. Yet when we presented ourselves at his door a little later, he calmly told us his mules were " too far away "! The next man who accosted us seemed quite serious. The mules would be at the hotel promptly at one. At two, we began searching for them — and found one of our old muleteers. But you should go tomorrow, *señores*. A little curtly we reminded him what a hurry he had been in to arrive at Aiquile. We would go today, or else. . . .

But of course! And this time he gave us saddles and stirrups. Thus luxuriously mounted, we rode out of town on the sidewalks — the mules preferred them to the rough cobblestones. The stirrups were the strangest we had ever seen, exactly like wooden shoes cut off just in front of the heel. The best thing about them was that they were very effective on the mules' ribs.

As we climbed out of the valley our guide ran ahead, motioning us on: he was taking the short cut. Behind us now we could see what a splendid valley Aiquile possessed: lying in the midst of green trees, hemmed in by small hillocks. Far behind it lay a solid wall of mountains. Bowman's mule was refusing to trot, so when we reached the top and found our guide waiting, he mounted behind, and between his lashings and Bowman's kicks we began to make good time.

It was over the top and down again into another valley; and on the other side the road zig-zagged up once more. A few cornfields lay brown and cut, but it was no longer uncomfortably hot. In the valley beyond, the second after Aiquile's, we came upon people who were on their way to the Sunday market, the women in their best red skirts and newest white *tongas*. At the other end of this valley lay the hamlet of Valle Granada, but it was quite dark by the time we arrived at the first house and, a little hesitantly, asked if there was a *hotelito*. Here was the smallest town we had

come upon, and yet the answer was in the affirmative! The cheerful young woman and her brood of children scurried about to make us comfortable. By the light of an oil flare we saw a large mud-walled room replete with furniture and oddities: a bed on either side, a table, and a giant cupboard facing the door which gave onto the road. Pictures of Christ with the bleeding heart on the walls, a few old skirts, a jar of stale candy, a row of bottles, two iron-bound trunks and some faded family photographs. But it was good; we all sat down on the bed and finished the last of a bottle of cognac. And so that night we had a room all to ourselves — sharing it, of course, with our old friends, the fleas. . . .

Our plans upon setting out from Sucre had been frankly vague. Primarily we were out to see the back-country, only secondly were we intent upon reaching a town. Now we had two choices — to the right (east) to Santa Cruz, or in the other direction to Cochabamba. Here at Valle Granada we could pick up a truck going east or west.

Or so we thought; it had been a long time since we had left that little house in the plains called Serrote, in the Matto

Grosso. For three nights and two days we waited in this hamlet. And on three mornings we were cheerfully awakened by our good hotel lady asking us if the fleas had got us yet.

Perhaps a hundred people lived in this little town. Most of them were away all day tending their sheep; we could see them from the hillock we climbed. At least here we had somewhere to go — across the road and up this ridge or to the stream which every truck would have to ford. At least, too, we were now as clean as ice water could make us.

Luncheon and dinner were every day the same, rice or boiled potatoes, fried eggs and soup: not in the smallest place, not even on the mule trip, did we fail to have delicious soup. Its making is a Latin art, decidedly.

During the hot hours of mid-day and the long hours of the evening we sat on the bed in our mud-walled room and played

checkers, equipment furnished by tearing up pieces of colored paper and drawing a board on the table. And with each meal we had a new drink. Our landlady had once visited Santa Cruz; evidently she was a teetotaler, for the bottles that decorated the otherwise bare shelves would never have appealed to anyone. It was something like the three bears: the first drink we tried, a vermouth " tonic " (of Santa Cruz

manufacture) was too much like medicine; the second, a so-called cognac, was too sweet; but the third, a peach brandy, was just right — or at least it was fit to drink.

On the third evening the town came rushing to tell us a truck was arriving. But it was only a construction truck going back to Aiquile. They brought news, however. The road ahead to Santa Cruz had been completely washed away by a month of unseasonable rains; nothing could get through. However, there was a chance that one of the trucks might be coming back, on its way home to Cochabamba.

A chance. About as much as of a double zero in roulette.

LLAMA TRAIL TO COCHABAMBA

By now our ears had become super-sensitive to the sound of approaching transportation, and long before it came down the mountain into Valle Granada we heard the truck, even though it was three-thirty in the morning.

Yes, they would take us along towards Cochabamba, the driver said, but his Ford had a loose fan and a sagging generator: please *espere* while they tried to mend them. So we waited in the cold moonlight for hours while the driver, two monkey-bodied boys and a lone passenger did their best to fix the engine by a rather unusual process of piling small boulders around the generator to support it — not a very reassuring truss. But they were taking the truck only as far as Vila Vila where the road ended; here we would catch the train for Cochabamba, and the truck would be taken along for a thorough overhaul. The driver seemed quite depressed about it — this was his new plaything, and he couldn't understand how a few bumps had put it into such a shape.

About six we started, Bowman piled into the back to be

buried alive under an assortment of gas tins, sugar cane, spare tires and old suitcases; Dickinson neatly squashed between three others on the front seat. Every now and then, as we made the mad dash to catch the weekly train at Vila Vila, we had to stop to inspect the motor; the fan kept making horrifying noises as it attempted to slice the radiator in two, and the generator knocked loose most of the rocks, which rattled around inside the hood and did their best to smash the rest of the engine. So we were late getting into Mizque, a pretty little colonial town with poplars all around a balconied *plaza,* and a man told us that we could never make it to Vila Vila in time to catch the train. He saw our disappointed faces at the thought of waiting a week more. "There *is* a llama trail from here to Cochabamba," he suggested, "which I believe has been driven during the past year. You might try that."

Dickinson immediately began a long harangue on the subject of how bad it would be for the truck to wait another week for repairs, and finally the owner was persuaded — half glad that we could get on to Cochabamba, half afraid that the truck would fall completely apart. So we bounced out of Mizque over the cobblestones, and immediately found ourselves winding towards the mountains, with only the barest sign of a trail to follow. We were in a narrow, green-bottomed gorge with a rushing stream, alternately plowing through heavy sand and loose gravel, nearly getting stuck, Dickinson chattering on and on to keep the driver from turning back, using more Spanish in a few minutes than he had ever used before.

Too late one of the small boys remembered that this trail was the one with the famous pass — there was no use going back now, and about four in the afternoon we started up a superbly beautiful and breath-taking series of zig-zags. For ten miles we went straight up and over the highest range of mountains in that sector of Bolivia. A mountain trail that was never designed for autos — switch-backing, hairpinning,

and horseshoeing up the mountainside. At each turn which the truck could not possibly negotiate without backing and filling, one of the boys would jump out, grab a rock to put under the rear wheels, and then yell " *pocito, no más,*" meaning to back a little more, until we seemed about to slip off the precipice. A terrific road for any car, full of rocks and washouts. The engine had become so overheated that every few turns we had to stop to fill the leaky radiator from the extra cans of water that we carried.

A road made for burros, llamas, men on foot; a road that scared all of us to death even while we reveled in the magnificent panorama that was spreading out below us. First the mountains on the far side of the steep gorge seemed to rise to the sky, then we were above them and could look over into a great valley spread out beyond. To the east, the *altiplano* stretched from one end of Bolivia to the other, north into Peru, south to Chile and the Argentine. It was like looking down on a great relief map of Bolivia, seeing the folds of mountains, which formed the foothills of the *altiplano,* running into it as roots bury themselves in a great tree trunk. All the time creeping along the cliff sides, the driver hanging

to the wheel and bursting into a sweat every time the trail narrowed so that we could see straight down into the little side valleys, where occasionally there would be a lonely Indian hut and a tiny patch of cleared field.

Still short of the summit, but with the sun already down beyond it, we stopped where a trickle of water crossed our path, to have a can of sardines and a heartening drink of *singani* which the other traveler produced. Already it was apparent that this trip was more than anyone had counted on. We were still a long way from Cochabamba, and with this road and a dead generator there was no telling when we would get there. The country grew more barren as we crept upward — we were averaging exactly three miles an hour; long ago we had passed the timber line, and now there was nothing but scrub bushes, grass and rock. At the summit we caught up with the sun again, blinding as it struck the windshield, and looking back we saw the mountains all on fire, deep purple shadows chiseled into them. Mountains stretching off into the unexplored and uninhabited places — like mythical mountains of the moon. Then we wound along the high country, circling narrow valleys which seemed bottomless, until the sun was gone and the wind and cold began to bite.

Bowman and the other passenger put down the curtains in the back and tried to keep from stifling in the odor of spilling gas; up in front, with the windows closed, the fumes from the motor turned the cab into a lethal chamber. Dickinson kept talking to the driver, partly from habit now that there was no danger of turning back, partly to keep him awake. About the war, as usual, and about the Santa Cruz-Cochabamba road which the driver said was under water near Samaipata to the east where he had come from; even the air service had been indefinitely canceled because the landing field at Santa Cruz was nothing but a lake. "It is hard on everyone," he added. "There are eighteen trucks I know of waiting on the far side of Samaipata for the road

to dry." And in answer to further questions he talked of Bolivia's transportation problem; he was skeptical about what the new government would do, adding that in Santa Cruz, the richest yet most isolated state in Bolivia, there had been a recent movement to set up an independent republic. " It won't go through probably, but it shows you what they are thinking."

The road didn't improve and with the headlights threatening to go out at any minute it became positively dangerous to negotiate the curves. We held a consultation and decided to stop somewhere to spend the night. But it was half an hour of slow crawling through the blackness before we came to the first hut. The driver called out in Quechua to the Indian and they talked for several minutes, but he had neither food nor room to sleep, and we drove on. Another half hour and we saw a second hut just off the trail; a woman came out this time. She had no food, but there was a sort of outbuilding made of adobe that we could use to sleep in.

Cramped and aching the six of us crawled out into the freezing cold and went into the mud-walled yard. The old woman, who was hard of hearing and spoke no Spanish, brought a candle made of fat and a bit of wick; then we marched across the yard to something a bit bigger than an outhouse, a square room with a clay chicken-roost bench on one side and a few corn cobs on the mud floor. One look convinced the others that the truck was a better place to sleep, even though a terribly cold one, but we unrolled our two dusty blankets and began to sweep off the roost. The others trailed disappointedly back to the truck to sleep sitting up, while we prepared to curl up in our meager covers. Just then the old woman poked her head in and began to talk rapidly in Quechua. Both of us produced that anemic smile which was supposed to signify that we were interested, and she disappeared. Again we started to curl up, and again she poked her head in, but this time she had a great armful of something. Whether she had retired to remove them — In-

dian women are reported to wear layers of them until they drop off — or whether she actually had extra ones, we shall never know. But certainly we enjoyed sleeping in her skirts.

Morning finally came. By five o'clock our driver-friend, more dead than alive, was persuading the old woman to light a fire so that we might thaw out. We stood forlornly around the tiny blaze, wrapped in our blankets, while she heated some water into which she dropped one stick of cinnamon — a tasteless tea which we strengthened with the last few drops of *singani.* It was not really light yet, the sky only less deeply blue. A crescent moon, just setting, hovered over the mountains, and a great mass of cold grey clouds dripped down. We paid the Indian for the lodging and the tea; she seemed pleased, but as we started the driver wondered what she would ever do with the money, out here on this unused llama trail.

Gradually the clouds to the east took on color as the sun climbed higher, pink with a faint blue sky behind them. We began to pass burro and llama trains, one of them loaded with fine copper bowls as big as bushel baskets. The animals were driven mostly by women, the men left at home to till the little patches of field. Though occasionally we passed an Indian man in his ear-tab cap, always chewing *coca,* star-

ing in amazement at the apparition of a truck along this trail. We were almost desperately hungry enough to chew *coca* ourselves, defying the superstition that it will make white men sick. The road was still terrible, full of rocks which scraped the axles, and the driver kept lamenting his new tires — forgetting the good luck which so far had kept the fan from carving the radiator in two.

Ahead of us now was a great range of mountains, running diagonally across our trail; it rose on the far side of the rich Cochabamba basin, and the driver, who had been muttering for a long time about the man in Mizque who sent us out on this road, began to look more cheerful.

Gradually the scene unfolded: a great friendly valley burned different shades of brown, with patches of trees mingling with the field patterns which were visible even from this distance. And many signs of houses, in groups and strung out in long lines beside the many roads, for Cochabamba is the most densely populated state in all Bolivia. Now we came down rapidly through a side valley, losing sight of the other for a moment. Switch-backing again, we passed a *finca* set in a tall grove of eucalyptus, its fields of emerald sugar cane lying all about it, the *casa* aloofly placed on a mound overlooking all this fertility. A sight almost new to us after days of the barren, back-country valleys where the few streams meant only that we could have a drink and sometimes make a half-hearted inquiry for food. A region wild and almost uninhabited, rich yet undeveloped, probably more typical of Bolivia than this splendid valley we were approaching.

An hour later we were all seated in a small-town hotel, wolfing *empanadas* and *chicha,* sausages and salad, bread and beefsteak: our first meal in nearly thirty-six hours. Cochabamba was only an hour more along the way, the road was good — and level; already we had begun to pass throngs of women plodding along the dusty lanes heading for the city, their burros loaded down with wood for Cochabamba kitch-

ens. All of us were expanding: the driver because he could get his truck fixed and could boast about the journey; ourselves because we had not had to wait a week for the train in some tiny hamlet; most of all, one of the boys, who had a girl named Angelica in Cochabamba. "Sometimes during the trip," the driver laughed, "he thought he would never see her again."

FLIGHT TO THE TROPICS

In the *plaza* at Cochabamba we see a sign advertising plane flights. There is one to Trinidad, an inaccessible town in the tropics at the headwaters of the Amazon. The price runs into hundreds of *bolivianos*. Yet for us the cost is less than eight dollars. We have just changed money at the bank; today's lower rate is twenty-five bills for an American dollar! What day does the plane go? Tomorrow. Then we shall take it. To spend a week in the warm tropics again. . . .

8:15 a.m. After an early cup of coffee, we are now at the airport, looking across through the cold air at the mountains which guard Cochabamba. The great tri-motored plane is already warming up, roaring like a dragon: a silver and black, low-winged Junkers. The American pilot stands by the ship. The sky seems free of clouds, but low on the ground there is a blue haze in the morning light.

8:30 We climb aboard and choose our leather and chromium seats. The co-pilot gives us chewing gum ("for relaxation") and cotton to stuff in our ears. This morning there are nine passengers besides ourselves, the two pilots and the radio operator. We taxi to the other side of the field, the motors roar, we leave the ground. . . .

8:40 The brown wall of the Cordillera del Tunari is coming closer. The plane surges upward: the yellow and red valley floor becomes a quiltwork pattern, the city slips away, lost in the haze. Thin dusty road-ribbons run straight for the mountains, dry river beds crease the baked earth.

8:45 Already we have reached the heights — Cochabamba itself, far below, is 8,500 feet high — and before us see the peak called Anocaraire, snow in its blue-shadowed crevices. We are at the level of the far-stretching, barren *altiplano* roofed with clouds.

8:55 Now we are over the clouds, which do not entirely obscure the view as yet.

9:05 And now we are surrounded by a dazzling mass above which we climb. The altimeter registers 4,500 — 14,625 feet. . . . The sun makes the clouds glare like snow. Beside us the windows are ice-cold, though the sun is now warming the cabin. Below on the cloud-surface is a faint small shadow of our great plane. Only the peaks of a few mountains are visible, purple and spotted with snow, in the distance behind us.

9:15 We are going down through the clouds, hunting for the town of Todos Santos. . . .

9:20 And suddenly we realize the transition we have made: far below, through thin clouds, we see a winding red-brown river twisting snake-like through the *selva,* a vast jungle of bright green.

We have descended from the snows to the tropics in a few minutes! The American pilot now beckons to us and we join him in the cramped cockpit. There is a low ceiling over Todos Santos, he says, three hundred days out of the year.

9:25 Still coming down, making large circles in an endeavor to find a break in the clouds, to discover if we can fly below them.

9:30 The palms in the jungle are quite plain now: the *selva* is impenetrable and immeasurable, stretching unbroken to the horizon. . . . The cabin has become hot and humid: our hands, which have been cold, are now sweating. The Bolivian radio operator brings in a message: field good, weather ok. The Pilot swears.

9:35 We are almost alarmingly low, we feel as if we were scraping the tops of the tall palms which tower on their white trunks above the foliage. Rain clouds dripping down into a humid, tropical forest. . . . We are following the course of the muddy river with its occasional yellow sand banks. The only way to find Todos Santos. . . . There are dozens of varieties of trees, each with its individual shape, foliation and height. Some with red blossoms start out against the green. The river is full of inert logs and brush which cause ripples in the sluggish current.

9:40 The back-washes, old stream beds where the brown water has dried up, are yellow-green windings full of fresh grass. . . . We hear the faint tinkle of the radio, receiving and sending: the operator must report every fifteen minutes to Cochabamba. . . . Now ahead on the river are a few yellow thatched huts. Figures are running across a cleared space beside the river.

The Pilot swears again: rain! Weather ok!!

9:45 We are sliding over the tree tops and down into the field. As the wheels hit the soft ground, the plane bumps. The Pilot puts on the air brakes, the ship slithers sideways on the wet grass.

9:50 No time lost here. Hurriedly the cargo is taken out. Off to our right at the edge of the *selva* are a few thatched houses and the incongruous steel tower of the radio station.

9:55 We are taking off again, skimming the trees, climbing until the huts are mere dots below.

10:00 Steadily rising still. Traveling up through the clouds to reach the sun again. Mist whizzes by over the wing surfaces and the ailerons.

10:05 There are light patches below where the clouds have parted and the sun hits the dark green. The horizon is a vague smoke-blue, blending the lighter blue of the sky and the dark green jungle. . . . A few bare places among the trees look like bald spots. It is all irregular patchwork now. . . . The clouds catch the sun and glisten.

10:10 Amid the cane-green suddenly a grey patch, a lake, far ahead.

10:20 At last we have come to it, flying directly over. It is grey only until the sun breaks through when it turns to silver. Now the whole earth becomes a pattern of cloud-shadows through which runs the constantly winding, bending river. Sometimes there are lagoons, cut off from the main stream: this stagnant water is black, contrasting with the bright red river.

10:25 We are out in clear blue sky, the clouds far away. Water, greenness, jungle: what a change from the stone peaks, the dry brown mountains, the grey scrub we left only two hours ago! The r.p.m.'s increase: 130 miles per hour as against

our four over the llama trail to Cochabamba!

10:35 A new river joins the other: a muddier, larger one, the Mamoré, which will wind its way northward hundreds of miles to the Amazon. We can plainly see the mixture of the two rivers, red now giving way to yellow.

10:45 First signs of human life since we left Todos Santos: a small thatched hut beside a field. Off to the left smoke rises, a plume above the jungle.

10:50 Now the clouds are a mere narrow line high above the indeterminate horizon. All the rest is brilliant, blazing blue.

10:55 We are losing altitude. Red roofs of a town ahead, so neat and orderly from the air, yet teeming with luxuriant foliage. We pass over it, then circle back in a vertical bank that makes the town slant off at an unnatural angle. We are quite low. . . .

11:00 The towers of the church in the *plaza* stand out above the low-lying houses of the town. We are again skimming over the tops of palm trees, between them the marsh-water catching the sun. The plane rushes forward, grazing the ground. We have landed in Trinidad. In two hours and a half we have accomplished a trip which would take two months by any other means. . . .

TRINIDAD

HEADWATERS OF THE AMAZON

It was not so much that we had come to one town, Trinidad, in the State of Beni, at the headwaters of the Amazon. Something much larger and more significant: the tropics. Yet the word " tropics " may spell different things. Where Rio was romantically tropical, Trinidad was realistically so.

As we walked into town from the airport along the grass-covered streets, we met the first signs. There were arcade sidewalks covered by extensions of the roofs to ward off a blazing sun. There was the peculiar amble of the women's walk, born of their constant head-carrying of jugs. There were slow ox-carts. Bare feet, darker skins, white clothes again, and the *plaza,* the palms stirring in a freshening breeze. The tempo of life was slow: there were pauses in both time and space between the seeing of one object and the next. All during the time we were in Trinidad there was the feeling that nothing happened. Until we came to recollect. . . .

" You can do what you like here, and when you like," Tilgener said. That perhaps was the essence of the tropics.

Tilgener was the airport manager and the agent of the company. We had come to him on the first afternoon after a fruitless search for a place to sleep. The Japanese hotel keeper, distracted by the sickness of his little boy who, the doctors said, had dysentery, had been of little help. We might eat at the hotel, but he had no rooms. Together with an obliging man we searched the town, asking at a dozen private houses. *No hay camas:* where had we heard that familiar refrain before? All we wanted were two hammocks which we might string up between any two posts, anywhere. *No hay, señores.* And finally they had suggested Tilgener.

He had expected us, he said; he knew the situation. Time and again he had told them in Cochabamba not to send visitors without forewarning them. Fortunately, he kept a couple of canvas cots for the pilots who occasionally stayed over night. If we cared to put them on his porch, we were welcome. And we could have a couple of *mosquiteros,* mosquito bars: they were quite essential.

His opening remark had been, "Why did you come out here?" Every old-timer must preface a first conversation this way. We explained that this was an interlude for us. If there was nothing to do, *'sta bien* — that was all right. Perhaps he had forgotten how cold it was on the *altiplano.*

He hardly knew. For he seldom went even to Cochabamba. All his talk, all that we heard, was about the Amazon. The destination for the hides, whence they were taken to the States and Europe. Tilgener had for years been the captain of a river steamer on the Mamoré.

"There were savages along there, in the old days?"

"They're still there. Sixty kilometers in any direction from Trinidad, and you're in the *selva,* where no white man has ever been. The Indians wear guards on their wrists — and that's absolutely all. Here — look at these." He brought out two beautiful bows and a dozen arrows decorated with pink flamingo feathers. "This kind of arrow is for small game. The very thin ones are for fish. And this one for

larger game. Including human beings. A couple of years ago they came into Guayaramerín on the Iténez River, up above. Killed five men with their arrows. And that's a town larger than Trinidad; ten thousand people and a military garrison. It's not the only case."

And they had said that nothing happened up here in the Beni country. . . .

When we went out into the late afternoon sun a band was playing, marching about town to advertise the bi-weekly movie which was held in the schoolhouse. Not once while we were there did the music stop, day or night. Someone was always having a birthday fiesta or some kind of celebration and these men insisted upon playing. Apparently it was their only means of livelihood.

The little *plaza* was practically deserted. From one of the stores came the sound of a typewriter: the only sound. It was as if everyone else were still enjoying the long noon-day siesta. A mare and her colt nibbled on the grass. . . .

Not until the evening was there a sign of life. Then the military band rivaled the other, and the people lazily circled the *plaza* or sat on the benches. Since leaving the Paraná, it was the first time we had been out in the evening without sweaters or jackets.

Back with Tilgener's cheerful household, we found some magazines, sent by the Englishman from down-river. "Out here, you go crazy without something to read. It gets to be the only thing you want from the outside." While Tilgener was talking he was sterilizing a hypodermic needle. "Kidney trouble. Probably from this damnable water: we can't drill wells because they always bring up salt. . . . You get to be quite a doctor when you're a river captain. I used to have more patients than passengers. But they come to you only when they're dying, after the witch doctors have done them in. . . . Too bad Anderson has just gone back to his mission. He's our *evangelista.* He'll never let any of us go

out there. I understand he's trained the Indians to do a little farming. It might be interesting for you, but I can't advise your going alone: it's three days across the *pampas.* Which doesn't mean it's far — all swamp."

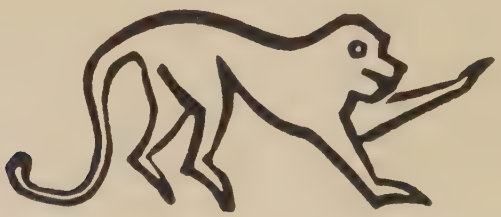
"How do the Indians take to missionary teaching?"

"Well enough, Anderson says, when they're hungry. They'll run off occasionally, but that's natural. They're used to moving about from one *chaco* to another — those are the little cleared fields you saw from the air. Anderson's been successful enough. Says he's a reformed thug; I don't know. . . . There was another fellow who made a regular business of training the Indians. He left behind all his clothes, plucked out his eyebrows — "

"Why was that?"

"Because they're suspicious of people with any hair on their bodies. He went out to them, stark naked, became friendly, and in a year he had them all raising produce which he sold. Don't know what happened to him. Suppose they killed him eventually." He yawned. "I'm going to turn in, but you suit yourselves. The cots are over there."

The mosquitoes were already whining and all the bugs and beetles in town had been attracted by the lights. We lost no time putting up our cots and stringing the *mosquiteros* from the porch rafters. . . .



Days drifted by. With the lassitude which comes from hot weather, particularly after the bracing mountain climate, we allowed events to happen to us, rather than attempting to

shape them ourselves. In the still afternoons, when the sky seemed to press down upon this greenness, we sat talking to some of the men who dropped in at Tilgener's for a bottle of beer. Anything more alcoholic was impossible during the day, though beer was quite expensive. Tilgener did not give it away: he sold it, scornfully pointing out the men who had bought more *cervezas* than they could afford in a month. "It was different during the rubber boom. When I first came out here in 1909 the German trading companies you see around town were making money hand over fist. Everyone had it: used to keep gold in chests, with a *mozo* to guard it. I've seen them pay half an English pound for a bottle of beer!

"I came out on contract to work on the Brazilian railroad that runs from the northern border of Bolivia to the San Antonio Falls on the Madera River — that's a continuation of our Mamoré. All the children of the men who were making money were sent to Europe for an education. But it was all over before the end of the World War — you've probably heard that story. Then for some reason the price came back in 'twenty-five, for just one year. More money was made selling stocks at their high than was lost in the eight years before. . . ."

In the office, where their radio station was casually relegated to one corner, the operator had switched on the power and was sending his regular quarter-hourly message to Cochabamba. In one of the English magazines which had just come we had found an illustrated article about one of the Company's planes which had been forced down in the *pampas* not far from Trinidad. "That's why we have the radio," Tilgener said. "Otherwise it might be months before we'd find them: that once happened, too. . . . The plane the article describes was found in no time. But we couldn't get it out; had to wait three months till the rains stopped. Even then the ground was soggy and we finally hit on the idea of laying hides over the mud for a runway. Of

course, we had to have men stationed there all that time to keep the engines from rusting away."

The hides were always with us; every day some were brought to the porch, and with the wind in the right direction the smell rivaled the Chicago stockyards. Yet it was pleasant to loll on the porch, looking out into a garden so luxuriant that it had become only a tangle of rose bushes and

orange trees against the bright blue sky. Usually Tilgener's *señora* would be sitting at one end, a beautiful woman with the deep, rich voice you occasionally find in these countries. During the day she wore the customary pale-colored dresses that look as if they had been bleached in the hot sun; where so much color exists in the landscape, clothes and houses are almost invariably white or of faint colors. Because the office was in the house, and Tilgener always here, there was a general Sunday atmosphere which contributed to our lazy feeling.

At times, of course, we wandered down to the river behind

the house, and out along its bends and curves past the brick factory, Trinidad's only industry. Long dug-out canoes served as ferries to thatched houses on the other side, and along the muddy stream women were constantly washing, their dark, well-developed forms simply wrapped about the middle with a sheet. And as we left the town we were sure to find a few women and their children bathing. Nude and quite unconcerned at our passing: in the hot countries self-consciousness is unknown. One day as we came back from our own bathing all the soldiers in town were having their weekly bath: it was like a great nudist colony, the women placidly doing their washing, the men's brown bodies hardly distinguishable from the river. At first we had hesitated to swim in this turbid water; in Aiquile and Valle Granada the streams had been so clear that here we instinctively rebelled. But you cannot resist the blazing sun. . . .

Bright afternoons, with the women selling bananas and oranges and melons underneath the arcades; cooler starlit evenings when the palms become silhouettes and the streets about the *plaza* are filled with women selling *empanadas* and food which they have cooked over their small charcoal braziers. And the long noon-day siesta when often we sat after meals with the two German boys who worked in one of the trading posts. Stores, they called these companies, but their real commerce was the exporting of hides. In exchange, they received dry goods from Germany.

The Germans were a trifle bitter. They had come out on contract, their salaries payable in *bolivianos*. And now the exchange rate was falling lower every day. "Bolivia doesn't care. The more bills they receive in exchange for English pounds and American dollars which come into the country, the easier it is for them to pay off the war debts," they argued. They themselves knew the fallacy of this statement. Bolivian law states that you must exchange exports for imports. But they were despairing. Prices had gone up more quickly than

their salaries had been adjusted. Three years under contract, and what had they to show for it? If they were careful of what they spent, they could pay their passage back to Germany. For Germany was surging to the fore: wherever we had met Germans we had encountered this new sense of hope and optimism. " But we have no colonies," they said. " That is why in South America there are so many Germans, and you can always find someone who speaks our language — it is more useful than English. . . . We Germans want only our rights. What if your nation had been bound to a treaty like Versailles? "

It was the same old story: put yourself in the other country's boots. We had not come to South America expecting to absorb a greater tolerance for Europe. . . .

Trinidad was rapidly becoming for us a collection of characters. Each one set against this peculiar environment, somehow affected by the isolation in the midst of this fertility. There was the old woman from Sweetwater, Texas.

She had startled us by approaching our bench one afternoon in the *plaza,* led by a little native boy: a shuffling, barefooted old woman, her face a mass of wrinkles above her black dress. " Good afternoon, suh," she said, with the softest Southern accent. Tilgener had mentioned a Mrs. Eleanor Powell, whom he had dismissed as " an American gone native "; but we were unprepared. She had heard we were in town. Would we please write a letter for her? Her eyes were so bad these days. " Though when I was younger I used to make a nice living doing needlework for the ladies. That was after my husband died. . . ."

She insisted she was a hundred, but from her story she might have been somewhat younger. She and her husband had left their homestead in Texas and come here when they were over fifty. Then he had died, leaving her with half a dozen ungrateful children who no longer spoke English, and

with nothing else but debts. Somehow through these years she had found food to eat and a floor to sleep on. Now she wanted us to write someone in Sweetwater to sell her farm. "It was a real nice farm, a hundred and thirty acres, with a right good house, too — three rooms. And cedar posts planted along the fence line." The neighbors she had "loaned" it to, forty years ago, had struck oil; but she had let them have the royalties.

We promised to write the letter, not having the heart to suggest that probably the farm had been sold for back taxes and that in any case possession was nine points of the law. . . .

It was the next day, Sunday, that we saw our first wild Indians — though certainly they were docile enough.

We had noticed the *señora* go out that afternoon in a new dress of midnight blue and a lacy black veil over her hair, but until we heard the music we were unaware that anything was happening. The *plaza* was already crowded, and just coming out of the church was a strange procession, led by Indian women in long cotton dresses, like nightgowns, bordered in red or blue. They were strewing rose petals before a life-size image of Christ, which was carried on a dais by six Indian men, all in the same kind of dress. Behind were the priests, one with a purple biretta on his head and embroidered chasuble, the others in the black robes and cowls of a monastic order. Following them were two lines in single file: first the matrons, in black with red ribbons around their necks and heavy black *mantas;* then older girls, in white with pale blue ribbons; and last the children, also in white. Bringing up the end of the procession was the band, playing a monotonous dirge which was somehow in keeping with this ceremony.

Slowly they made their way around the *plaza,* the red-robed figure of Christ swaying above the heads of the crowd, until they came to the church again. In an instant the scene

changed; the image was unceremoniously borne into the church, children ran screaming down the nave and their elders began to gossip. It was like seeing the scenery taken away after the last act at the theater; yet doubtless the illusion was not destroyed for them. Perhaps only we felt the difference between ordinary, everyday life and the spiritual. Here the church was more a gathering place as in the ripe, medieval manner of bygone times.

" What do you think of that? " someone addressed us in a deep, bumbling voice. A bearded man with long sideburns and a great straw hat was standing beside us. We began talking and he invited us into the *cantina* for a drink.

" But you can't drink here on Saturdays or Sundays."

" Poppycock. We'll use the back room."

We established ourselves, somewhat against the nervous little proprietor's wishes, in the back room which served as office and bedroom. The bearded man, who, we found, was a Swiss cattle rancher, explained that the proprietor was Spanish (he had a large picture of King Alfonso on the wall), and that the authorities would like to catch him breaking the local week-end prohibition; but it was safe here.

We asked him what the procession was all about.

" Oh, some kind of trumpery, special saint's day, I guess. Did you notice the Indians in their nightgowns? That's their special regalia when they come into town. Only clothes they own, I suspect."

He was in town for semi-annual provisioning, had come in on the boat which had just arrived at Puerto Ballivian, up above. His ranch was on the Rio Apere, one of the many streams which flow into the big river. " In the old days, before they prohibited them, the Indians used to have some wild dances at fiesta times. I've seen 'em in their fancy headdresses and embroidered costumes — quite a sight. Some of 'em, too, rigged up like monkeys or ant-eaters. All that's gone, but the church gives 'em something of a show."

" I sell my hides up river," he went on to answer a ques-

tion we had put. "Never been any farther into Bolivia than this town. Our part of the country might as well belong to Brazil."

Again echoing the sentiment of Nick, in Sucre. "And if it were?" we asked. "Would that help its development?"

The Swiss tugged at his beard. "Yes and no. As far as I'm concerned, I don't care very much. Out where I am it's a free country, if ever there was one. The tax collectors know better than to come into it. . . . But you'll never make Trinidad into anything. The floods wash away the crops. If you'd been here in 'twenty-nine, you'd understand. Everything was under water. And some day the whole place is going to be washed away. Don't see how it's lasted four hundred years. . . . That's the trouble. A climate and rich alluvial soil that should grow anything tropical, assuming that they could develop it; but until they bring in refrigerated planes, practically, and charge nothing for the service, they'll never develop this country. The tropics are useless to Bolivia."

"A railroad from Cochabamba — ?"

"They wouldn't let Patiño do it — he's the tin-mine king, you know. One of the ten wealthiest men in the world, they say. His idea was a motor road rather than a railroad. Wanted a lot of land in exchange, so they refused him. It's pretty impractical anyway." He was not interested: his market would always lie to the north. . . .

The son of our Japanese hotel keeper died the next day. The little coffin, surrounded by candles, was placed in the dining room, and no meals were served. No one felt very cheerful; the *patrón* was respected all over town. Under the circumstances we decided to take Tilgener's suggestion and visit the port and La Loma. . . .

One of his *carretas,* drawn by four oxen, is waiting for us at the airport to take us the twelve kilometers to the port — the farthest south a steamer can navigate. We sit in the cart, a hide for a cushion, and jolt along over the *pampas,* nearly thrown out at every bump. This is the seventh kind of transportation we have had to take in Bolivia.

Often we come upon a swampy place — the water standing days after the last rain because the ground is so hard. The

sun beats directly down on us, for the palms and gnarled trees come only in occasional clumps. It is slow progress: we have flown from Cochabamba in less time than it takes to reach the port.

A group of thatched houses, the high pointed roofs coming down almost to the ground, the sides of bamboo spaced so that air may circulate between; an old river steamer; and a warehouse full of hides and ethyl gasoline, brought from the Amazon for the planes — that is all there is to Puerto Ballivian. We can find some lunch, they tell us, at La Loma.

The trail leads through a young jungle and is a mere swampy track; in a few moments we resign ourselves to wading. We are wringing wet when finally we sight the large buildings of this cattle *estancia.* Beyond a great thatched house for the workers is a paddle-wheeler, pulled up into an improvised drydock. On the hill, beside a row of stately palms, is the main house. . . .

After lunch the young *Administrador* very willingly shows us around. La Loma is only part of a tremendous enterprise, devoted in this part of the Beni to cattle raising. "We've got only eighty thousand head at present," he informs us. "You may think that a lot, but not when we have twenty-five million acres."

An area practically two hundred miles square! He and his brother manage it for the owners, mostly Bolivians who have scattered over the world, living in London or Paris, far from their source of wealth. This is largely a headquarters; he shows us the various shops where men are making furniture, or butter, or soap from the tallow. "We are just getting back to normal after the war," he says. "Come upstairs and we can talk in the cool while we have a bottle of beer." He leads us up to an airy room over the offices. On the wall we see his honorable discharge from the aviation service.

"You don't think there will be more hostilities, then?" we hazard.

"There is no chance of more war." He speaks quietly, with the authority and confidence his peacetime job of managing this great Company instills in him. "At this moment either side could make a quick thrust and capture a large sector of the Chaco. But the position would be untenable. A stalemate. Bolivia needs to devote herself to peace. She must organize and consolidate her states."

"And Colonel Toro?"

The *Administrador* is an army man. "Toro will consolidate the country. Already he has published a program — new roads, more taxes —"

"That should affect a company like this."

"We are nothing compared to the mines. That is our real wealth. . . . You doubtless have heard," he goes on smoothly, "about the disaffection of the Cruzanos. That Santa Cruz wants to secede and form an independent republic. This would be very serious, as the state is one-fourth of all Bolivia. The trouble was that Toro was too generous

at first. He kept two former cabinet ministers who went out of their way to anger the Cruzanos. Now that is remedied. Bolivia will be united as never before." He seems positive of the verity of his statements, and digresses into talk of cattle when he hears we have been in the Matto Grosso. "I have just bought several prize zebus, too. In the Argentine they laugh at our cattle, but they do not know the tropics. Such cattle are all this land is good for. . . ."

We explain some of the methods Don Carlos uses; are his the same?

"No, we have so much land we cannot have fences. Most of our cattle are wild, and each man must lasso ten a day — to bring them in and tame them. Of course, we run them into corrals for branding. Our greatest troubles are the snakes and tigers. We lose two thousand head a year that way. You have read stories about spearing tigers? I do not believe them. Perhaps an Indian might have done that many years ago, and they do still use bows and arrows. But spearing — no, I very much doubt it."

We branch off into other topics, and he speaks of the goods that must be exchanged for hides, how the Company has gone into a wholesale business because of that. In the north, beyond the Beni River in the Territory of Colonies, the Company collects Brazil nuts, which are their most profitable product. "Rubber, too, but that is only a by-product: you find the two trees together. Although the price of rubber is a little better. Last year we shipped out eight hundred pounds — you see, that is nothing."

Especially is he enthusiastic about the proposed airline from Trinidad to the Amazon.

"It will be run by Brazilians?"

"Oh, naturally, as far as the border." He does not seem to realize how his interest in his job commits him. For several years there has been plane service to Cochabamba and La Paz, but that is not his direction. Beyond a question he is a loyal,

patriotic Bolivian. Yet his business must look to the north.

We have stayed so long that it is late when we begin our hike back to Trinidad: the ox-cart has long ago left the port. This way leads through the palm groves, the orange light of the late afternoon setting the landscape on fire. As it grows into twilight we attempt to take a short cut. In a few minutes we are mired. There is no use turning back now, it is too dark to see the way. And presently one of us lets out a whoop: we are gradually sinking deeper, until the mud comes up above our knees, then to our thighs. The rest of the way is a weary plowing, pulling one foot after the other out of the sucking mud. Fortunately the incident appeals to us as humorous: we can picture ourselves dragging into town, looking like two ghouls emerging from freshly-dug graves, scaring the natives to death. And tomorrow there will be a bath in the river.

Yet it occurs to us that here is another aspect of the tropics. This was the sort of land they fought in down in the Chaco. Blazing hot *pampas* or mire. We should not like to be shouldering a pack and a heavy rifle. . . .

At night, it was our invariable custom to sit on the porch, reading one of the old magazines despite the bugs and mosquitoes which whizzed past our ears or cunningly crept down our backs. Because we knew that presently Tilgener would come out and casually start some story. Not meaning to, for he was laconic and unimpressed by his adventures. But over a period he told us a great deal, all the while smoking the cheap

cigarettes which come in red packages like firecrackers: twenty for little more than two American cents, and not too bad, at that.

The Indians seemed to have become more savage as the white man trespassed on their property, for, Tilgener said, the first couple of years that he captained a steamer he saw none at all. Then one year they came out of the jungle, threw their bows and arrows on the ground and ran to the edge of the bank, their hands in the air: it must have been a bad year for their crops. " When we took them on board they grabbed everything we had. You can't trust the devils. Once I was coming down in a dug-out canoe and passed another one, going upstream, staying close to the bank where there was less current. Later, I found out that a steamer had picked up the only survivor — the Indians had done for the rest. Only one left was a woman, who had managed to cling to a floating island. . . .

" You seldom find blow-guns, as you do up farther, but they have poisoned arrows, all right. Never heard of anyone analyzing the poison. . . . I don't see how they shoot so accurately. They'll lie down on their backs and pull back the draw-string of the bow, using their feet as braces. Shoot an arrow up into the air, and it comes down right on the back of their game."

After we had come back from La Loma, he gave us a few footnotes on the Company. " The family that owns it used to be the rubber kings of Bolivia, just as Patiño is of tin today. They had more money than was good for them. A couple of the sons shot themselves, another's been divorced and there has been a lot less savory scandal than that. The young fellow who runs the Loma is all right. I remember the Englishman they used to have.

" One time he wanted to raise a sunken boat, so he ordered a hundred pounds of cable. After four months it came. Seven feet of it! He'd never thought to find out how much cable weighs. He was one of those ' bloody fools ' you hear

about. Never learned. Another time he asked me what I thought of his buying some ladies' hats to sell at the Company stores. You know women don't often wear hats in this country. I said maybe he could sell a dozen. That wasn't worth while, he said. But I guess the catalogue excited him because he ordered one hundred and twenty dozen — ten gross. He finally got rid of about twenty. . . ."

The last night we were in Trinidad, Tilgener came out holding the bows and arrows. " I've been thinking," he began slowly, " you fellows like these so, I'll make a deal with you. For a long time I've been trying to get some American dollars so that I could send for a magazine subscription. What would you say to these two bows and a dozen arrows in exchange for a subscription to the *National Geographic?* "

It was a bargain immediately. And so we left Trinidad the next morning on the plane, with a curious bundle, six feet long and a few inches around, having done a little trading ourselves.

LA PAZ

"Look — now you can see Illimani," the Pilot points ahead. The altimeter registers sixteen thousand feet: the plane has risen over the mountains beside Cochabamba, dipped down to the smooth floor of the *altiplano* at the mining town of Oruro, and now is approaching the range of snow-capped peaks which extends northward seventy-five miles in an unbroken line. One of the highest ranges in the Andes. Or in the whole world. And now directly before us. . . .

Illimani gleams, towering twenty-two thousand feet above them all, a study in black and white against the blue. Two cloud stratifications girdle it near the base, like the rings of a planet. Could we have been in the tropics yesterday? Here once more are only sky and rock and a sun which at this height blinds without warming.

Now ahead is La Paz, sunk deeply below the smooth and barren *altiplano* in a kind of crater with precipitous walls, the *Valle del Chuquiapu*. The plane passes over the capital: for an instant we see the main *plaza* with its government

buildings, the wide boulevard of the Prado, and the road which leads steeply down into it. City of Our Lady of Peace: commemorating a false victory of a Spanish viceroy. We circle, losing altitude, coming to rest on the floor high above the town. Below lies the highest capital in the world. Below the *altiplano,* dwarfed beneath Illimani. Yet itself over two miles high. . . .

The Pilot had said that La Paz was the place to buy *vicuña* rugs, made of the soft fur of the smallest member of the llama family. So in this city whose streets run upwards at sixty-degree angles, where to walk means to be out of breath, we first sought out the *peleterías,* the fur shops. We were in a spending mood: the hotel we had found, after reclaiming the luggage we had not seen since Villazon, was costing us only forty cents a day, including meals. Even in the capital!

Though La Paz is a city it has more the quality of a large village. After our weeks in the little towns it seemed very busy and bustling, yet we had the feeling that it was a sort of garrison posted against the vast and towering mountains.

It was on our rounds that we met the Circus Lady from Munich. We had finally decided upon one shop and were still hesitating between two of the *vicuña* rugs, when she came up to us. " This is the better," she said in English. " I have been in all the shops here and in Peru, and I have never seen a nicer one." The cost of it, with the exchange rate still so greatly in our favor, was less than eight American dollars.

" You are traveling around South America? "

" With our circus, yes. Haven't you seen the signs of the Circo Munich? "

" It's right beside our hotel."

" Then you must come and see our show tonight. But you had better wear your overcoats."

Of course we had no overcoats, and when the sun goes down La Paz plainly asserts that it is a mountain city, quite as

cold as Potosí. Inside the big tent it was somewhat warmer, though we could still see our breath. The band, dressed in red and yellow lion-tamers' coats, was playing outside to attract a crowd, and the *cholos* in their bright shawls and white hats were already filling the bleacher seats. We found the Circus Lady from Munich by the entrance, warming herself over a small charcoal brazier.

She offered us some very welcome hot punch. Until after her act, she said, she could not drink. Although she had a French name she had been born in Munich. Her first husband had taken her to his home in Houston, Texas. Now she had been traveling for months in South America. " It is so cold these nights we cannot do as well as we know how. Half of the troupe is sick. And these South Americans! They complain at everything, they will not perform if they think they are ill. But of course it is our show, and we have to prove we can keep on. . . . There, the band is coming in, I must go and dress."

She gave us seats in the first row, directly before the sawdust ring. The band struck up an erratic tune. This might be very bad; after all, what could we expect from such a troupe. Here came the ringmaster, in his baggy, oversized full dress suit.

We were quite wrong. With each succeeding act we became more impressed: at the trapeze work, at the Mexicans on the high bars (one of whom said in English, " Jesus Christ, my finger! " when he burned it on the bar), at the dog act, and the contortionist. They all pitched in, between acts or when they were not performing, setting up the paraphernalia, coiling ropes or clearing the ring. The ringmaster became an acrobatic clown, the Mexicans put the dogs through their tricks. And then our Circus Lady from Munich appeared with her husband and a German as an acrobatic trio! Even in her fur coat, she had not looked big enough to hold these men upon her shoulders, yet here she was, doing just that.

She joined us again beside the brazier for a rum punch. " I shall get pneumonia yet, in that costume. And it is so

much harder at this altitude. We were terrible this evening." She had the professional's usual contempt for a less than perfect performance. " It is only that I have been doing the act so long — I have many more, too, but I cannot stand to do them all. Twenty-five years; and I am not quite forty." She might have said she was ten years younger; she looked it.

" You had a good crowd tonight."

" Always it is the same here in La Paz. In the afternoons, too. We have been here four months! Would you believe there were enough people? I think they come many times."

A clown in a baggy suit, his face painted white about the lips in the Latin American tradition, was making the crowd roar.

The Circus Lady sniffed. " Everywhere they like him best of all. Particularly the double-meaning jokes. He knows it, and is too proud. Since his wife died in Potosí he has been chasing after all the women. The week after he had been weeping so bitterly he brought a blonde to the train when we left. I kicked her out. He is not decent. Like all the rest of these filthy men, he has syphilis. But what can you do? " It had not been a paying proposition in some of the towns. There were days when they had nothing to eat, the take was so small. And officials were always making it hard for them. A good thing they all spoke fluent Spanish. She had learned it many years ago when playing in Morocco.

After the last act we met her husband, a dapper little fellow, obviously in the French manner. They had not yet had dinner, it was almost midnight, but we sat talking and having another punch. Comparing notes about towns. The Circus Lady was very well informed and could still be enthusiastic despite their troubles. What town had she found the most interesting?

" Cuzco, I believe. You go there? Ah, I know you will like it! But the Indian market is very fine here. On Sunday it will be best of all, you must go and see it."

A mass of color streaming down into the market place. Bright wares, bright costumes, as conglomerate and brilliant as our Potosí rugs. The streets on Sunday are filled with women, sitting on the cobblestones, selling fruit and vegetables from the tropical Yungas beyond Illimani.

In the square the greatest crowd is around an organ-grinder. What is the special attraction? Upon closer inspection we find he has three canaries in cages above his music-box. A man steps up and gives the organ-grinder ten *centavos.* The music ceases, the door to one of the cages is opened, and, at the same time, a large drawer just beneath the cages. The canary hops out, and with its bill picks out a small paper about the size of a razor blade. This is what the customer gets for his money: his fortune told. Dickinson tries it and finds he will live to be eighty-seven and have eleven children. . . .

Everyone buying and selling, the air loud with talking and bargaining — a great deal in the Indian tongue. And from the vantage point of one street, looking down the length of the wide Prado with its white statues and pre-Incaic monolith, we see Illimani, its snows sparkling against the deep morning blue like the top of a three-pointed, engrailed shield.

Here is the largest market we have seen in Bolivia. Its wares are tempting, and so cheap that we satisfy ourselves by buying: red and yellow and green woolen caps, *chullos,* such as all the Indians wear — peaked and with ear tabs, worn under another hat; little woolen llamas in pink or blue or purple (for eleven cents) ; small bright-colored rugs, *caseiros,*

in the style of our Potosí rugs (fifty cents); mittens with patterns of people and llamas knitted into them; a bag of tightly woven wool. We have come into Bolivia with only our essential luggage — and that included very little indeed. These new purchases, together with our *vicuñas,* our bows and arrows from Trinidad, and our rugs from Potosí, will go out with us.

Everything we have seen all through Bolivia seems to be gathered here. It is natural that many travelers do not see Bolivia as we have seen it, poking into corners not always easy to reach; but La Paz, so near the Pacific, should give any visitor an intimation of this land, its boundaries so ephemeral, its personality so definitely its own. But perhaps it is because we have seen so many aspects of the country that we can easily recognize all things represented here. Nothing new to discover and describe; rather a composite of all our Bolivian pictures. It is fitting yet unusual that a capital should be so.

Pushing our way through the marketers, we happen upon a tiny shop above the market place. Here are the antiques they have told us about in Potosí: great silver spoons called *topos,* pointed at the end that the *cholos* may wear them in

their dresses as ornaments; small silver cups and chalices; silver rods carried by the *alcaldes,* or mayors of the mountain villages; candelabra and finely woven *lliclas.* The proprietor is more interested in showing his wares and explaining their names than in selling. " I do not worry, because even-

tually I will find a buyer. I know their value, and sometimes others recognize it, too."

We are in a buying frame of mind, but our expenditures are curtailed in all other directions when he shows us what he calls *querus.* They are flat-bottomed bowls, made from deep brown *chonta,* a kind of palm, with two simple handles. In the center of the bowl, carved out of the same piece, are two yoked oxen. The sculpture is so revealing for all its simplicity that we are not surprised when the man says: "These *querus* must be five hundred years old. They are ceremonial bowls for drinking *chicha,* which was the sacred drink, you know. My price is not high for them, I have many more expensive things. But to me they are the finest of all. I will give both of them to you for one hundred and sixty bills."

Six dollars, approximately. Automatically, we name a lower price, he counters, we relent a little, finally compromise: a sale would not be complete without this ceremonial. On neither side is there a doubt that the price should have been twice the amount. Still, they are cheap for us only because of our American dollars.

"You have not been to Lake Titicaca?" he asks us.

"No, but we must of course cross it on our way to Peru."

"I think I can say you will like your *querus* more when you have seen the *lago,* and Cuzco, too. You see, the name for the bowls is Aymará, the *altiplano* language."

"Yes, we've heard it spoken." We tell him where we have been.

"Aymará and Quechua are mixed together. In Potosí it is Quechua, again in Peru you will find it. The Aymaras began a great civilization, although the Quechuas founded the Inca dynasty. And Peru takes all the credit. But it is we who gave birth to it, on Titicaca."

When we leave the shop, we laugh at this show of national pride. And yet — and yet. . . . *It is we who gave birth.* . . . Tomorrow we shall be at Tiahuanaco, near the shores of Lake Titicaca. The man's phrase is provocative. . . .

4.
PERU

GREY STONES IN GREEN VALLEYS

TIAHUANACO

LEGENDS AND BALSAS

In the small village of Tiahuanaco we came upon a beautiful church. It was early in the morning. Indians were sitting on their haunches before the door, selling their wares. We went inside.

Long white walls formed the nave and reached to the simple tunnel vault. Only the cornices were painted, flower motifs in Indian tones of red, blue and green against these white walls which lead to a faintly gleaming gilded reredos behind the altar. Near the door an Indian woman with a baby strapped to her back was on her knees, sobbing hysterically. But from the crossing came the sweet odor of incense and the faint notes of a violin. We approached and sat down on one of the wooden benches.

An old bearded man was playing and chanting, and beside him knelt two Indian women and a man. Before them, three children held aloft little clay bowls which they blew upon to fire the incense. No priest was about: this ceremony belonged to the Indians.

Before the portals of this church long ago had been placed two ancient statues. Saint Peter and Saint Paul, they are now called. But they were carved with grotesque designs, and hundreds of years ago stood in the Temple of the Sun. Here at Tiahuanaco, once on the very shores of Titicaca. Whence, the legend says, Manco Capac, the first Inca, sailed to found the Empire.

The legend runs: On a clear, cold night centuries ago among the ruins of Tiahuanaco, before the Portal of the Sun, stood two young wanderers, Manco Capac and Ojllu, led to this ancient city of the Aymaras by a friendly condor. Searching for guidance, possessed of a strange urge to be the founders of a new race. Tired from their long journey they fell asleep on the sacrificial altar of the Sun — and dreamed that the monolith of Pachu Mama, goddess of the earth, rose before them and in a weird, metallic voice told them the story of Tiahuanaco:

"Civilizations live and die. They come from the dust, flourish a little while, and then are swallowed by the ocean.

I have followed the course of human accomplishment; I will tell you of Tiahuanaco, sacred city, and I will tell you of the future.

" Once upon a time, a mighty city rose on this spot. These rocks you see formed Kalasasaya, the great wall that surrounded the temple of this celestial place, and the Portal of the Sun was its western entrance. See how small the entrance is — that is to make those enter humbly who wish to be initiated into the priestly rites. See where the pyramids once stood, and the monoliths of the mythological gods. And Akapana, the military fortress built on an artificial hill. Picture this sacred city where gathered all the races of the world for guidance, where at night the Amautas, the priests, studied the heavens and formulated their star worship, where they meditated on philosophy.

" I will tell you of these priests and their philosophy. Of their black robes which they wore lest a brighter color reflect the light and disturb the astral influences. Robes decorated with gold- and silver-threaded borders, gold for the Sun, silver for the Moon. And on their heads they wore four-pointed miters. Of the Amautas themselves, noble as the Andes, serene as the ocean seen from a great height, strong as the rock of the Cordilleras and the air about the snow-capped peaks. And of their teaching and philosophy, filled with the spirit of work and energy. ' Only the vigorous tree gives good fruit,' they used to say. ' When the trunk has sent out all its roots and has impoverished the soil, when the seed is dry and sterile, then has come the hour for the woodcutter.' Always they delighted in parables, talking to their people from the temple steps at night, emphasizing the need for leadership. ' Near my home,' an old priest said, ' there is a corral where the cattle are kept, eating the fresh grass brought to them from the field. The poor animals are fastened by the nose — they cannot move, they are good for nothing unless we free them. But who will give liberty to man? No one but man himself, through his intelligence,'

" So, under the Amautas, the most daring and revolutionary ideas were promulgated. Let me tell you: noting the lunar influence upon the sea, and its corresponding influence on man, the priests studied the powers of the heavens, occupying themselves with learning how to control them, trying to discover if they could not master all forces through atmospheric waves. Perhaps they would have been able to regulate the weather, to utilize the tides, to control man's emotions.

" But that was not to be. As with all civilizations, a great era is followed by a great corruption. The breakdown was of the spirit — from magic was born the degeneration of the cult. Reality was forgotten: with the coming of this darkness there spread over the city a cloud of apparitions. The Hapinunos and the women hobgoblins with their hideous, grotesque faces and their long, flaccid breasts began to fly through the air. The people of Tiahuanaco forgot their spiritual guides, the stars, and struggled against their fate with the cloudy intellects that precede the fall of all great civilizations. The time for the woodcutter had arrived. Torn by doubt and restlessness, the sacred city was swallowed by a deluge, and where the deluge did not reach, Akha Phuco, the fire wave, destroyed instead. So perished Tiahuanaco, which once encompassed all the continent, and for centuries there was silence."

The light of morning grew stronger in the east as Pachu Mama spoke prophetically of the future:

" In you, Manco and Ojllu, I see a new nation, founded on the Quechuas, urged forward by the great traditions of the past. In you I see generations which will break the evil spell that weighs over Tiahuanaco, and will once more expose its sacred stones to the glory of the Sun. I speak now of a new historic cycle which will last five hundred years, and of great social changes under this new Empire of the Sun. Of a true agrarian communism and of a mighty people who will learn to harmonize the advances of the present with the

traditions of the past, whose stamp will ever be upon humanity. Sorrow is fecund: only from the collapse of Tiahuanaco could come the new empire. You, Manco, will be the founder. You, Manco, are the first Inca."

These were the prophetic words of Pachu Mama. The first rays of the new sun found only the condor, guardian of the two young Indians, reposing thoughtfully upon a granite boulder. Nothing remained of the glorious vision. Only the enormous, silent rocks strewn on the lonely *altiplano.*

Today the flat plain stretches from Tiahuanaco to Guaqui, on Lake Titicaca. Yellow patches of stubble run back from the dark shore where the reed boats, the *balsas,* are drawn up on the muddy fringe. Boats such as Manco Capac and Ojllu used when they set sail to found the Inca Empire, and are used today as if in defiance of those who are skeptical of legends. Found on no other lake in the world, these *balsas,* which in Spanish means " something which floats upon the water." They do exactly that: their gracefully curved sides, made of *totora* reeds, rise well above the surface. They are perhaps twelve feet long, the smaller ones, with great bunches

of green and yellow reeds filling the narrow cavity between the bulging sides.

We are merely excess weight this afternoon as we pole out on the calm lake with two Indian fishermen, a young boy and his father. The real business is to catch fish; now with long strokes they shove the *balsas* through the reed beds, towards the open water. There, with the spikes that are attached to one end of the poles, they make their first demonstration. Plunging the business end down into the clear water, the old man brings up a wriggling little yellow fish. He pokes it at Bowman, who pulls it off the spikes and drops it on the reeds. We cruise about, watching the water: then a sudden lunge, and another is impaled. Not once do they miss. Foolishly their prey takes to a clump of grass at the bottom, or like an ostrich, buries its head in the soft mud. So the spearing is easy — if you know how.

Only this one kind of fish is edible: the *amarillos,* yellow ones, which are packed in old kerosene cans and shipped to La Paz. For this work only a *balsa* will do. The little boy's is new; he had gone to Desaguadero, around the shore a way, to buy it — for six *bolivianos,* twenty-four cents. A month's wages for the boy.

Between them, this afternoon, they make only forty-five *centavos,* for the fish are worth little; they are merely served as appetizers in the clubs, hotels and bars.

It is getting late when we turn back; the reflections are almost perfect in the green surface as the boats glide across the water. Only the cries of birds as they scatter before us. Only the rhythmic poling of the two Indians standing in the *balsas.* Only the rippled half-circles that radiate behind us. Once the little boy stops at a thick bed of reeds, where he finds two duck eggs. "They are fresh," he says. But how he knows is a mystery. . . .

The sun has long ago gone down behind the mountains when we near the shore again. Only behind us an orange glow shoots up into the dark sky. Ahead of us, far across

the *altiplano,* Illimani is still visible; its clear facets, and the great snow range of the Cordilleras, which come to meet us, still catch the light.

The same *balsas,* the same Indians, the same Titicaca of the legends. . . .

LAKE TITICACA

FLUTES AND PIPES

The steamer which was taking us across Titicaca into a new country had dwarfed the small *balsas* as we sailed out of Guaqui a few days later. Yet this very steamer had been carried, piecemeal, from the seacoast on the backs of mules! Every piece of iron which had gone into its making had been painstakingly hauled up the mountain passes. To this lake at the height of the Bolivian *altiplano* — the highest navigated body of water in the world. A passenger who stood beside us at the rail was telling us about it.

" That was seventy years ago," he said, " before there were railroads, of course. The navigation company has a newer steamer, but you see this is still pretty serviceable. Times haven't changed the life here. Take the Urus — have you ever heard of that tribe? They live on the southern shores of the lake in straw huts on stilts, exactly as they did long before there was a Temple of the Sun at Tiahuanaco."

" But they have no connection with the rest of the Indians about the lake, have they? "

"No, you've been seeing Aymaras at Guaqui. They say the Aymará language is the Sanskrit of South America. Came before the Quechuas, who were the Incas. The Aymaras are fierce beggars, even now. A few years ago they came down into Guaqui and killed several people. We could see them lighting their signal fires in the mountains, then all of a sudden they swooped down. Fortunately they vented most of their ire on the railroad, tearing up the track, although they did mutilate several of the workers. They've always had it in for the railroad."

"What in the world has it done to them?"

The man laughed. "You've no idea how superstitious the Indians still are. Remember that great pink monolith in the Prado at La Paz? Well, the railroad hauled it from Tiahuanaco, where the legends say it stood for ten thousand years. The Indians objected strenuously to its being taken away. And when a dam broke in La Paz and flooded part of the city, killing hundreds of *cholos,* they said the goddess was wreaking her vengeance. The flood swept the bodies down to the foot of the statue, as it happened, naked and armless like so many monoliths themselves. At the same time the engineer of the railroad was very near death. So they said that was part of the vengeance, too."

As we were talking, the steamer had swung around through the smooth green water until we were facing east, heading towards the other end of Wiñay-Marca, the small part of the lake separated from the greater portion by a narrows. Before our bow was Illampu, higher even than La Paz's Illimani. When we came up again after lunch we were already into the narrows, between the peninsula of Copacabana and the mainland; the Strait of Tiquina. On either side were the twin towns of Saint Peter and Saint Paul, their green trees and white churches against the brown, terraced hills.

"Copacabana is the town to which half of Bolivia goes on a pilgrimage twice a year," our fellow passenger informed

us. " Once on the fifth of August, just at the height of the storms — and Titicaca can be rough! The other holy day is the second of February, the Day of Purification. A shrine was erected in the town at the end of the sixteenth century. They say a descendant of the Incas made a devout pilgrimage to the Church of the Purification in Potosí to study the image of the Virgin there, and then came back to make one just like it. . . . But originally Copacabana was the place where the Indians stayed when they came to worship on the Island of the Sun. There: you can see it ahead now." He pointed with the stem of his pipe.

The water was shining in the afternoon sun, casting long shadows upon the rocky cliffs of the Island. " Wild-cat rock," Titicaca means, and the name was first used to refer to the island alone.

Certainly the wild majesty of this lake could have been felt no less in those remote days. We had come into the open expanse of water now as we slowly passed the Island, and as the afternoon wore on we became isolated in the midst of this inland sea. Half of it belonging to Bolivia, half to Peru: dividing the honors of the birthplace of a great civilization. . . .

It was not difficult, late that afternoon as we drew near to Puno, on the northern shore, to imagine Titicaca as it once had been. For against low purple hills and the deep blue of the water we saw the orange sails of a whole fleet of *balsas* — the Indians arriving for market day. As we came closer, we saw that these sails were made of reeds, like the boats themselves. A dozen figures, black silhouettes, huddled before the flaming sails. . . .

Fourteen men are gathered around a table in a cold, moonlit room in Puno. None of them is as dark as an Indian, though our friend, who has brought us here and now sits beside us, has the heavy features and searching eyes of the true native. The men are playing Aymará music. . . .

The Indians in their peaked caps and short breeches are coming down the mountainside to Puno, driving their llamas before them. From a long distance through the clear air

come the sounds of the pipes, playing in a minor key. Pipes which they say a goat-footed Pan played in the Greek isles, and whom the Irish still hear on early spring nights. Made of reeds graduated in size. The tune is the *Kallamacho.*

Now the guitars of the men in this room strike a more happy chord. The music rushes forward, the high tones of the flutes and pipes swirling about the melody like dancers:

this is *Ccapo,* word for "fire," the start of the fiesta. And next, the *Feria Puno* itself. Four guitars, strumming in unison; five mandolins, three flutes and the pipes. Faster and faster, then suddenly a break, and a more stately rhythm. *Triste,* they call it. Yes, it is essentially and unvaryingly sad. Like the low mountain wind.

These men compose the *Lira Puno,* an organization which has played in many cities. Their honors have only come after effort: every night they play — one could hardly say practice. From nine until midnight they again understand the Incaic beginnings and the survival of the spirit, which is a part of their bodies quite as much as of those of the pure-blooded Indians in the high places back from Titicaca.

Half-way through the cold evening they serve us tea, and the Director of the group comes to talk with us. "*Que aparece?*" he asks us. "What do you think of it? To most outsiders it sounds only strange at first. The music of course is only an adaptation of the Incaic, because they had no stringed instruments until the Spaniards came. Before that there were only the *wanka* and the *tinya,* drums, and these flutes and pipes." He called over some of the men so that we might see their instruments. The *quena* was a vertical flute, open at both ends, the *antara* their name for the pipes of Pan. Soon after the conquest the *charango* was added, a five-stringed instrument, its sounding-board made of an armadillo shell. In some regions a harp is used. "But the *antaras,* the pipes, are of this region alone. You will not find them even in Cuzco."

Our friend who has brought us here interrupts. He is no musician himself, merely a *simpático,* part of a group of men who have become interested in the Indian arts. "Tell my friends about the music," he asks the Director.

"We have to guess at a great deal of it. Only one book has been found. Of course we still have the tradition with us today. This much we do know, that it is pentatonic, composed of only five notes to the octave instead of the eight of

modern music. Consequently there are longer intervals, and the effect on your ear is strange. Essentially, this is the basis of almost all the music of early civilizations, as for example the Chinese."

"The notes do not correspond exactly to any we use?"

"That is right. A perfectly tuned Incaic pipe would not duplicate any notes you might strike on a piano. Of course, we must adapt it to our stringed instruments, just as the Indians do to theirs."

We have noticed that all the music is in a minor key. The Director confirms this: "For some reason, most of the melodies seem to have been written in B minor. It is possible that they had more modes than our diatonic scale which has only majors and minors. That is difficult to say."

We are already lost in his musical technicalities. But we have heard enough to realize that this is a sophisticated music, full of every kind of musical trick, with a variety of rhythms and a syncopation as effective as, although differing from, our own jazz.

"What do you think of Peru?" they all want to know, more interested in asking questions than answering them.

"We can hardly say, we have just arrived. Certain things are of course different from Bolivia; we have noticed that even in the last two or three days. You, for example, are holding an election instead of having a revolution, as Bolivia has done. But everywhere we see the word APRA. . . ."

"Ah, that is the popular revolutionary party, headed by de la Torre. It has grown in strength these last few years. But there is no chance for him to win. The others have posters, you have noticed? And APRA is only scratched upon the walls."

There is the same fatalism that we have found in Bolivia, with this difference: they speak of the possibilities of a general strike if the election should not be run fairly. And they intimate that the charge of unfairness will probably be made. The *Apristas,* we are given to understand, are the liberals

(the opposition calls them radicals) who wish to free the Indian from a servitude which is no less because he is legally as good as the white man.

Yet the apathy of these men seems strange since only a moment ago they were so enthusiastic about all things Indian. But perhaps they are not yet aware intellectually of what is in their hearts when they play this music. Or — they are not yet quite willing to admit their allegiance. Surely they do not print for no reason at the top of their programs:

> . . . . *A la carrera jovenes*
> *vuestros pechos tengan la fuerza de las piedras*
> *vuestros nervios tengan movimientos*
> *azotados con los vientos de la Cordillera.* . . .

("In the running of life, young men, may your breasts have the force of the rocks; may your nerves have movement, whipped by the winds of the mountains.")

We have seen the *balsas* coming into the bay of Puno, their sails orange in the sunset, against the deep blue water; we have even sailed again in them here. We have talked with the men of Puno — and found a national consciousness lacking in Bolivia. We have talked, in this very alive little town, with men who have painted and written of Titicaca, who speak Aymará and Quechua. And tonight, long after we are asleep, we are awakened by the sound of guitars. Across the street, in the cold moonlight, Indians are dancing and clapping their hands. The rhythm is so contagious we wish that we could join them. Most significant are the Incaic overtones, linked with the music we have heard the *Lira* play. It is music which leaves a lasting impression. . . .

CUZCO

As we turned into it, the narrow little side street off Cuzco's *plaza* was nearly black. One feeble lamp behind us cast only a weak shadow of ourselves on the cobblestones, but picked out on either side huge blocks of stone that formed the sloping, buttress-like foundations to the houses: megalithic blocks of Inca masonry, so finely fitted without mortar that the joints were scarcely visible. Squares and pentagons and octagons of rock whose angles seemed to flow one into the other. Stone with a satin surface, carved by a bronze hatchet out of the Andes.

Far ahead, at the street's end, a blur of light was shining, formed by a thousand needle-points — the candles on the altar of a church whose front portal stood open to the night. Monument to the Spaniards and to Christ, framed from this distance by the Incaic walls they conquered. Conquered, but no more thoroughly than this scene implied: a compromise, a curious amalgamation. . . .

Today we have climbed the hill which rises to the northeast, and are standing on the parapet of the great fortress of Sacsaihuamán — a name not as unpronounceable as it looks. Below is a generous valley, the pride and glory of Peru, hemmed in by great mountains. Perhaps even the first Incas visualized the scene much as we find it now, for they planned a great city here, and their descendants populated it until there were two hundred thousand inhabitants. As in Potosí, the population has been decimated since then. But to one looking down from this eminence, two thousand feet above the Plaza de Armas — *Huaca Pata,* Holy Square, to the Incas — even now Cuzco spreads its dull red roof-tiles over a large part of the valley. Adjoining the Plaza de Armas is a smaller one, the Plaza of Joy, where our hotel is located. That farther green spot is still another; and on beyond, the fields stretch like greedy tongues into the very mountains themselves.

The Incas did not build those great churches and cathedrals which raise their domes and spires above the surrounding pattern of tile-and-tree. Yet those buildings were erected because the very force and persuasion of the Incas' own sun cult demanded a splendid retaliation by the invading Roman church. . . .

We are standing now upon the Throne of the Incas, built of beautiful, squared, mortarless masonry — so perfect still that we can hardly believe it was fashioned at least five centuries ago. Behind the throne lies the fortress proper, descending in the rear by means of three tiers to a kind of plain. On the farthest side of the plain a huge outcropping of rock, which served for a gallery, carries more thrones, carved directly out of the natural stone.

Picture them here during the southern-summer festival of *Capac Raimi,* when all the sons of Inca caste took part in the puberty ceremonies which lifted them from youths to worthy warriors. *Orejones,* the Big-Eared Ones, the Spanish called them, for in their ears they fastened pins to which were joined tremendous circles of copper, burnished like gold. Upon the

Inca-king's head were bound thick feathered fillets of many colors. And over the tunic which reached to the knees was a gorgeous mantle, often of soft *vicuña* wool interwoven with gold and silver threads, sometimes of colored feathers in

bright, rich reds, yellows and blues. The feet were sandaled, and in the right hand was held a mace or war-club — like the king on a pack of cards; upon their arms, they wore bracelets of gold and silver.

In such costumes, the Inca and his brothers and sisters and those whom he had made part of the imperial caste, waited for their sons, who were racing from Huanacauri, the great peak on the southern edge of the valley, five miles away: performing the feat which the first Inca had done on coming into the valley. One of these sons would become the Inca; the rest, his generals, who would sweep back even farther the frontiers of the Empire.

The Empire of Tahuantinsuyo, of the Four Great Provinces. So large that ever since approaching the Bolivian Andes at Tucumán we have been traveling through it. So far-reaching that after Pachacutec, greatest Inca of them all, it extended from Quito, capital of present-day Ecuador, nearly to Santiago in the middle of Chile — as far as from New York to San Francisco.

How did it come about, we wonder, from that legendary beginning on the southern shores of Lake Titicaca. To have conquered all these Andes, two miles and upwards above the sea, mountains set with emerald valleys, studded with grey stone. Those grey Andean stones are the best clue: firm and massive, the bastions we are now facing tell something.

They tell of a time before Sinchi Roca, first Inca to reign in Cuzco after Manco Capac. These bastions, zig-zagging across the plain, were erected long before his day and are not squared and smoothed as are the thrones and forward wall which overlook Cuzco. Rather they are megalithic, mammoth, of every shape, and of a size which dwarfs man — some of them twenty feet tall and as thick through. Irregular in shape, as when quarried, yet each one fitted *perfectly* to the next, so closely that not even a knife blade can be inserted between them. A race of such superb masons would not yield easily. And yet all the legends say there was no battle. That Manco Capac, showing himself before the Indian villages in a shining mantle of burnished gold, proved to them he was a Child of the Sun.

These Incas must have been as austere as the exacting ceremonies which their sons performed. Dignified as the great mountains and the high snow places. Glorious as their beautiful costumes, and the far prospect from Sacsaihuamán. And proud. Proud to the extent that, fearing less valiant blood would run in the veins of their sons, they married their sisters — although this well-known story is now often discredited, except in the case of the later Incas when the Empire was so large and powerful as to be as dangerously unstable as

that of the Romans. No need to romanticize and exaggerate: their accomplishments are still here.

We have seen many mountain valleys now. Perhaps it is because we are standing upon this fortress that we are breathless with admiration. For it is a warm and lovely valley; even at this height, which is only less high than topmost Potosí, it is pleasantly warm even as the sun sets, turning the mountains into blue shadows. Now we are only thirteen degrees south of the blazing equator, and in these secluded valleys anything will grow. . . .

As we descend again, down a rocky and dusty path lined with the tall eucalyptus, the churches rise almost to our level. Churches upon the very sites of temples. And here, half way down, is the lonely and nearly abandoned San Cristóbal.

Quite unremarkable, beside those great piles in the town proper. But near it is a long wall, and above, a garden protected by another wall with many trapezoidal doors of Incaic architecture: sides sloping away, so that gravity will hold them firmly and timelessly in place. Here was the Colcampata Palace, where the Inca youths were instructed in warfare in the very shadow of the fortress above. By this time they had done with nurses as caretakers, but these same nurses continued to be with them as concubines; it was merely that they taught the more mature pleasures now. A custom perhaps not as shocking nor as illogical as it first appears.

From the mountainside above come the piercing notes, blown to us fitfully, of an Indian's flute, piping the llamas down to the market place. The native's life has not changed, nor has his costume to any extent. A woman accompanies him, wearing shawl and *montera* — an interesting hat that flares upward and outward something like a Breton sailor's, but is flat across the top and heavily decorated; the underside is of red llama wool. They are the logical successors of their forerunners, the Indians who brought the best of their goods to the Inca palaces, who considered it an honor above all else to wait upon the Child of the Sun.

On the far mountain beyond the valley someone has carved the word APRA in letters so high it is plainly visible here: *Alianza Popular Revolucionaria Americana,* "Popular Revolutionary American Alliance," it means. . . . As we wind down into town over narrow streets we hear the cries of little newsboys, selling the many four-sheet papers which have sprung up, more as political leaflets than news organs, because of the coming election. The signs everywhere are Spanish although from dark cubbyholes come Quechua words — the official language of the Incas — and everywhere there are Incaic names. In those times there were no elections but a far better system of governing. . . .

Ahead of us, the arcades and the balconies of pale blue and yellow, all about the Plaza de Armas, are Spanish. Yet every house has a grey-stone foundation and Inca walls, exactly as they stood in the days of Inca Pachacutec. With very few windows, sloping inward towards the top, massive and cold — austere.

Inside, the floors were covered with rugs of dyed *vicuña,* the walls hung with textiles such as we have seen in the museum: finer in color and design than anything of their like today, equaling (scholars now admit) the best Persian examples. . . . On the floor, or in the niches which are trapezoidal counterparts of the doorways, were fine clay *aryballus,* the red and black urns with their formalized patterns. These great palaces, often three hundred feet square, still form the basis of modern Cuzco — if there *is* anything modern about the town.

True, there are the movie signs; one of the theaters is housed in the best example of Spanish colonial architecture. There are automobiles — which must continually stop for trains of llamas. Spain has added the huge reddish-grey cathedral and the Jesuit church, themselves four hundred years old. But one can never say that the Inca remains are merely picturesque: it would do this dignified race an injustice.

In our hotel again, we ask for a *pisco* sour, because with a

cocktail they serve the most delicious sorts of flaky pastries filled with meat — this despite a dinner which we know will have at least eight courses: at this altitude our appetites are never completely satisfied.

We are seated in the bar when a young man approaches us. He is from *El Comercio,* the biggest paper, and he would like to have the reactions of visitors to Cuzco.

For just a moment we smile proudly. It is flattering to have one's opinion asked — and to be put in the paper. But in another moment we realize it is indicative of something else: that Cuzco is not visited as often as it should be, that unlike Mexico it is no tourist haven. Even the best guide in town is none too fluent with his English. Perhaps it is because the Incas are, in a sense, still very much alive — and a dead civilization always seems to acquire a greater reputation than a living one. The dead pyramids of Teotihuacán outside Mexico City are visited by hordes of travelers. But in Cuzco, where people still live behind Incaic walls, strangers are few. . . .

Every morning the bells of Cuzco's many churches wakened us: ringing thirty-six times for a five o'clock mass; a series of three, nine times, for six o'clock in another chapel, and so on, until we were thoroughly awake. If this was not

enough, there was usually a fiesta in progress, to the accompaniment of firecrackers. And the artillery had had the happy thought of practicing (it sounded as if they were in our *patio*) before most sane citizens were up and about.

But breakfast in the early morning was a pleasure. To sit at a little iron table in the warm sun which was just entering the *patio* — with its stone pillars and its apple-green balconies on both sides looking down on the garden below. Eating the customary South American breakfast of coffee and rolls, but supplemented here with oranges, and the rolls toasted and — actually! — buttered. For no apparent reason, Cuzco's fare was much better than we had found elsewhere. Possibly it was because we had been living for so long in poor Bolivia. Here it was of course expensive — seventy-five American cents a day for our large room and three meals. . . .

One morning we decided to take a hike out to the ruins beyond the fortress. A little vaguely, we were told the general direction of the trail, so that presently we seemed to be lost on a steep path which had taken our breath away and left us in a desolate corner of the mountainside. Some Indian women approached us. When we addressed them in Spanish they hardly looked up from their spinning, which they managed to do even as they descended. "If we find someone who speaks Spanish, we'll be lucky." But the next passerby gave us directions because we had resorted to using names alone: Pucará, Tambo Machai, Kcencco — names the Incas used, names the Indians understood.

We came out into upland country which for all its bleakness might well have been in Scotland. Yet now and then there was a field, and ahead on a knoll a group of stone-and-adobe houses beneath a few gnarled trees. Not until we reached them and saw that they were inhabited did we realize that they were not the ruins.

Here was an example, not the first we had seen, of the fundamental concept of the Incas. This group of houses, or rather the people inhabiting them, formed an *ayllu*, or clan. In

pre-Inca times each clan was a separate unit headed by its own *sinchi,* chief. Naturally the clan was of one family; land was held in common, worked in common. With probably very little thought, the Incas adopted the same custom — or, as is probable, their own *ayllu* may already have had it.

Yet from that simple concept grew a system which covered, towards the last, three hundred and eighty thousand square miles: a system far from haphazard or decentralized. The *ayllus* were bound together into larger units, grouped again and again until each of the Four Great Provinces was governed by one man, who in turn reported to the Incas. It was an administrative hierarchy as compact and logical as could be founded today. One official was at the head of ten *ayllus;* theirs was the right to choose him. Another governed fifty, another one hundred, then a thousand, five thousand, up to the forty thousand which constituted a province. And all the land was worked in common just as this collection of people in these houses were working their surrounding land.

Was it communism? One of the first things you hear of the Incas is that they had a communistic system. The answer cannot be put positively one way or the other. Certainly, if no man held property as we think of it, the social ownership of land, a major Marxian tenet, was complied with; it was, in effect, the same principle of agrarian co-operation we had heard about at San Ignacio. But further developed here. The state was paramount. And the state was the Inca. Part of the land was tilled for him and for the religion which he personally represented, sun-worship. Luxurious as was his life and that of his caste in comparison with Indians in remote villages, still he was pre-eminently austere, a warrior who led his armies for months or years at a time. All that he did not use was turned over to the storehouses in every district, to be drawn upon by all the people. His system of governing shows that he was benevolent. Not because he was simply kind, but for the more binding reason that he wanted his Empire to be co-ordinated. The sayings of Pachacutec are indicative:

"When subjects, captains and *curacas* cordially obey the Inca, then the kingdom enjoys perfect peace and quiet.

"The noble and generous man is known by the patience he shows in adversity.

"He that kills another without authority or just cause condemns himself to death."

The Inca, then, was the benevolent dictator. Yet all the people were his children. It was impossible to want for the needs of life under his rule. The old Spanish chroniclers are full of tales which show that many hostile peoples were won over to the Inca rule simply by having explained to them the Inca system of government. A dictatorship, perhaps, but not very far from a "dictatorship of the proletariat," a phrase which we all know today. But we can view an ancient communistic state with much less personal emotion, with less fear, less hatred, than many people feel towards one of our own times. This we can say: the communism of the Incas worked. So well that there are more than vestiges of it today among the Indians. . . .

Beyond this *ayllu* we came upon Pucará, which in Quechua means fort. An irregularly shaped group of buildings with the same careful masonry and the same trapezoidal doorways. The land fell off on three sides, making it an excellent site for defense purposes. And upon every side were terraces, probably used for growing food whenever the tribe was besieged. Doubtless this was pre-Incaic, although it is difficult even for archeologists to be certain. Tambo Machai, however, is definitely of Inca origin.

On down a winding road, among mountains which rise above the wild and almost treeless upland country. A land blessed with a hot sun in a sky of great billowing clouds: no wonder it was the sun they worshiped. After a night that at this latitude should be hot but at this height cannot be, we ourselves often wanted to offer up some kind of libation to the merciful, warming power.

We came upon Tambo Machai as we rounded a curve: a great wall of terraced and niched stone. And beneath a fall of water which ran through a carved trough sat a naked man.

Yes, he was very much alive. When he came out from under his cold shower bath, he told us that every day he came here: the waters were curative. Certainly they must have been stimulating, for his whole body was red, and he shivered now even in the hot sun.

"In a few minutes I must start back," he said. "I run all the way to Rodadero." That was the district behind Sacsaihuamán. "You want to stop there on your way back," he told us. "You will find some very fine thrones carved in the rock there, too. And underground passages. Most of them are closed now, but they say some of them led right down into Cuzco."

Underground passages: that was one of the pretty stories we had heard and mentally pigeonholed in the same corner of fantasy with the tales of buried Inca treasure. But fantasy, we believed, containing an element of truth, for there is no reason at all why it could not be so. There is the story that at Tiahuanaco one of the first Spaniards dug up gold in his back yard. Because he died immediately after, and because superstition was supplanted by government regulations against disturbing the site, no one can say what is the truth. Perhaps some day archeologists will investigate the area more thoroughly.

Having no desire to emulate the Inca youths by a cross-country run at this altitude, we left the bather and started to walk back leisurely. Above us in the fields, Indians were just beginning to plow. But with a curious instrument. We approached to watch them.

Two men were cutting large lumps of the earth which a third man turned over. The tool was on the order of a spade, except that its business end was much sharper and narrower, and on the handle was a protuberance that served as footrest

to aid in driving it into the ground. In perfect time, the men raised these instruments and with a swooping, unhesitant motion drove them deep into the earth. There is something beautiful about the rhythmic motion of concerted work: we stood watching, fascinated.

Presently one of the men stopped to take off his ear-tab cap, wiped his brow, and with gestures invited us to come have some *chicha.* It was an opportunity for them all to leave work and join us. From a great red jug they poured the maize drink into their two cups. We must drink first. And we sat on the broken sod, making signs as conversation, and drinking. In their absurd hats and knee breeches, these Indians seemed not at all different from what their forefathers must have been, who probably tilled fields in these same hills. Only now they had iron for their " foot plows " where before it had been copper or bronze.

As we left, we offered them some cigarettes, realizing that we were expected to return — not repay — their hospitality.

And going on down the road, towards Kcencco and the underground passages, we began talking of this incident, for it had given us a clue to the success of the communistic state of the Incas: simplicity. Even today the Indian wants very little. In the old days those who lived in warmer and lower valleys had for luxuries tobacco, used only as snuff, and *coca,* which, however, the Incas rigidly monopolized, doling it out only when the men must do an especially hard task. For the rest, each Indian was nearly self-sufficient: at his weekly markets he exchanged one kind of produce for another. And always he had corn from which to make *chicha.* What else was necessary? He as well as his wife could fashion clay, and weave. If there was drought or flood, he could go to the Inca storehouse. True, he must pay tribute to the Incas, and no man was allowed to be idle. But if he had many sons and daughters, the work was light. If he was lame, halt or blind, someone else would supply him; or if he was under twenty-five or over fifty, his work was merely to help. He

could not be called upon to work for the state more than three months of the year; for there were so many Indians in the Empire, at least twice the number of people living in the same area today — even with the great armies and all the "public works" which, without machinery to help, took many more laborers than they would today. Only the Indian's time was exacted, or in the case of a craftsman, his skill.

The Indian and his *chicha:* that was what the Inca considered, that was why communism and an orderly system of government lasted for so many centuries. The notion that the Inca was a super-man, from a superior race, has long been scouted. To us, who had been geared to the fast and complicated life of a northern city, this simpler life seemed none the less more healthful. A hard life, as life in the Andes even now is hard — we knew that! But by that very measure, a good life. . . .

In the sacristy of the little church adjoining the cathedral of Cuzco is a most significant painting. At first we wondered what it had to do with religion. In our several visits to these churches we had seen canvases attributed to or in the style of Rubens and Titian and Rafael: the churches seemed virtual museums of religious art. But this painting, done in a crude style, was simply a bird's-eye view of Cuzco in 1650, dated March thirty-first. On that day began a series of earthquakes which nearly destroyed the town; sixteen hundred tremors were felt during the year.

For explanation we appealed to the one-eyed boy who had brought us to the sacristy. Without answering he led us through a massive door into the cathedral itself. The towering pillars of the nave, the floor below, and the vaults above were of grey stone; yet the church gleamed — from the solid silver altar, from the gilt frames of hundreds of pictures, from the little candles before the numerous side altars. He opened the gold gates to one of these last. There was a sculptured figure of Christ. "*Señor de los Temblores,* Lord of the Earthquakes," he explained. "He it is whom the Indians venerate above all."

We had one explanation. Jesus of Nazareth assumes a very special character in the Incaic city of Cuzco. Cuzco, which means "navel of the world." . . .

That is very indicative of Cuzco. Nothing stands just for itself in this town. Spanish houses with Incaic grey stone walls. Churches upon the sites of temples for Inti, the sun god. Names of places, of *barrios* or districts, which are Spanish translations of Inca meanings. An amalgamation. For nothing has completely disappeared or been supplanted.

The cathedral faces the east side of the spacious Plaza de Armas. On the south side is the *Templo de la Compañía de Jesús* — the Jesuit church, still called so although the Order has long been gone. Its curious baroque façade is squeezed between massive towers, yet inside it is lighter than the cathedral; its classical columns and elaborated triforium are better

architecturally. From a trapdoor at the crossing we went down to a beautiful underground chapel, its vault brilliant with frescoes in startling primary colors. To us most interesting of all was a series of paintings showing the marriage of Inca princesses to Spanish noblemen. In the background are the Incas in all their ceremonial costumes. So it was that the proud Incaic race became diluted — or enriched, according to your viewpoint — by Spanish blood.

Francisco Pizarro, Conqueror of Peru, had begun this amalgamation in 1533. A devout ruffian, he had brought Father Valverde with him when he marched down the Incaic road from the north to this capital. In the north he had put to death one of the two Incas, Atahualpa. But Atahualpa was ruling only the Kingdom of Quito — that is, Ecuador. His step-brother Huaáscar had been given four-fifths of the Empire, and remained in Cuzco.

After four hundred years the Inca kingdom had become too unwieldy, too centrally governed — exactly as the Spanish rule was to become in another four hundred years. The father of these two Incas, enamored of the more tropical land to the north which he had conquered with two hundred thousand soldiers, had ordered that his heart be buried in Quito, his body in Cuzco: symbolic to the point of being prophetic. Before his death news had been brought to him of enormous ships full of white men, seen off the coast. That was, of course, the beginning of the end.

But only in a sense and only to a degree. As our guide talked we were reminded of events about which the newspapers this very day were talking. Mussolini was harking back to the glories of Rome, Hitler was recalling that his people sprang from a race of strong-willed Anglo-Saxons. The glories of an empire do not die. The Spaniards of Spain have gone, and still the Indians speak Quechua. The language of the legends, of a retentive folk-memory. . . .

Every little district of Cuzco has its own name. In the *barrio* of San Blas one day we found a fiesta in progress. We had climbed a narrow street so steep that it is a series of steps. Down the street came Indians in their deep blue and red ponchos, the women with their bare feet and flaring red and green *monteras,* their shawls or *lliclas* about their shoulders. An Indian district, where even the men in modern clothes had bronzed features, black hair, and the characteristic long nose. . . . A little platform wreathed in bright-colored paper streamers had been set up outside the church, before which a band was playing endlessly, stopping only for drinks of *pisco.* Nuns hovered at the church entrance. Small boys were shooting fireworks, rockets which exploded with a sharp *pop* and a gust of purple smoke in the clear sky. Once more, amalgamation. . . .

Seeing churches is an inevitable part of traveling. Yet there are ways and ways. We had no need to hurry; if one clear cold night we came upon a church, lighted by a thousand candles, we would drop in for the evening service. There were guides who could have shown us the most important Incaic walls, but we preferred to come upon them in a series of days, as the natives do. Once we were searching the town for a *montera,* another day we were looking for paper and ink or a toothbrush. Above all, we were reacting from the unfortunate example of a stout American woman schoolteacher whom our hotel keeper described to us. One evening at dinner we had found her name posted at our hotel. Anyone who stayed here, we thought, must be informed, as the few tourists usually stop at the much more luxurious hotel next to the railroad — an absurd location.

We never saw the lady. She arrived by train at six-thirty. She spent all that evening trying to get a hot bath — a nearly impossible procedure. At four o'clock the next morning she was up, obtained a guide, and drove to Sacsaihuamán and the surrounding ruins. By the time they reached the last one, it was just light enough to make out the superb masonry.

"Oh, I'm tired of ruins," she told the guide. "You go look at them for me." And at seven o'clock she was again on the train. . . .

Not every detail of Cuzco remains equally well fixed in our memories. But those things which do almost always have significance. As our visit to the monastery of the Order of La Merced, facing a busy shopping street. A white-robed monk conducted us about the exquisite Moorish cloister built around a *patio:* of the half-dozen cloisters which are Cuzco's great pride, this is the finest. Yet most memorable of all were the paintings of the martyr-friar, Padre Salamanca. Lighting a candle, our monk took us back into an underground cell, where, with almost no light, the Padre had spent years painting his naïve conceptions of heaven and hell. By the weak light we saw the bright colors and grotesque designs of the frescoes — the work of a man with unquestioning, steadfast faith. Whether or not we agreed with him, even whether or not our guide of today was interested in more than the artistic result, we could not help feeling the intensity of a religion which had immediately decided to display all its splendor to a people who had a gorgeous worship of their own.

We understood that best when we went to visit the Monastery of Santo Domingo. Here was the site of the great Temple of the Sun, whose beautiful and elliptical end is still standing: half of the *convento* is built upon excellent Incaic masonry, the most refined example in Cuzco. A young novice, already tonsured, pointed out the two small cracks which were all the damage done by the series of severe earthquakes three hundred and fifty years ago.

Here was the heart of the Inca religion. Eight centuries ago the Temple was built, and for several generations served for the palace as well. Which was proper and fitting, for the Inca was the Sun-Child, his brother or his uncle always the *villac-umu,* the high priest. Only those of imperial caste might enter the sacred portals.

The days we spent in Cuzco were the very days on which the Incas had every year made their great sacrifice to the sun, in their month of *Inti Raimi,* during the June solstice when their god hung suspended in the sky. In the Holy Square the Incas and the high priest gathered. Representatives from the provinces were relegated to another square, for only the royal blood might see the Inca hold aloft his two cups of gold, brimming with the sacred *chicha.* The cup in his right hand he poured into a conduit which flowed to the Temple — by this action, he brought the sun god to join them in their libations. And from the other cup the Inca sipped, then divided among his favorites the remainder. After this ceremony, all solemnly entrained through the narrow, sloping grey stone walls to the Temple, where the Inca and priests entered, offering their cups to Inti, the god. By this time the lesser officials had gathered at a distance from the portals: the chiefs from the mountains in their robes of puma-skin, or costumes made to resemble a condor, bird of the Andes; those from the hot countries to the north in their brilliant feather-mantles; and from the old-established coastlands, chieftains in finely woven cotton cloths, so beautiful that they rivaled the Inca's dress. Each in turn, according to his rank, gave

up his golden or silver cup, decorated with the birds and animals of his region.

This was the culmination of the first three days. Next, a black llama was sacrificed — black, because one of pure white was considered blemished by his dark nose — and from the breast-cut the priest dragged forth the lungs, heart and gullet of the animal. If the lungs still breathed, the omen was favorable. Crops would flourish, conquests would be successful, life would run smoothly. If not — they tried twice again. For another week they held the festivities, but with heavy hearts if there had been no good omen.

All this time the Handmaidens of the Sun were serving the chieftains, passing the sacred *chicha* which they had made, and the animals which had been roasted upon sacrificial fires. For certain ceremonies they also made blood-pudding, which by an impartial observer can be likened to the medium of the Christian communion. These maidens were responsible for the weaving of the fine *vicuña* wool and soft bat-fur mantles of the Incas.

The comeliest maidens of the land — young and, some say, virginal. Scholars even today like to argue over such a human point. There are all kinds of theories: that they lived in convents only till the age of puberty, when they were given to worthy chieftains or appropriated by the Incas; that some of them stayed forever in the convents and took care of the temples. And that upon occasion they were sacrificed — although never as often nor in such a wholesale manner as was customary at the same time among the Mayas and Aztecs of Mexico.

It makes little difference. The Incas were not squeamish about such matters. Every man had more than one wife, but only one could not be deserted; she was never superseded by the rest, hers was the household to direct. The priesthood had nothing to do with marriage. . . .

One diagram of the interior of the Temple of the Sun has come down to us. The Temple was a resplendent affair:

a high gabled roof covered with plaited straw and, inside, the long walls sheeted with gold — not because of the metal's worth, for only the Spaniards were greedy, but for its resemblance to the sun. There were statues of gold also, and some say mummies of all the Incas. And above the altar at the eastern end, a golden plate, standing for Viracocha, the creator-god.

For the sun was worshiped only secondarily and for the benefit of the people. The Inca, who identified himself so closely with that divinity, soon began to feel the need of a more all-powerful being to worship, and in the last hundred and fifty years of the Empire, Viracocha became the object of a special cult of the imperial caste. . . .

The monk had taken us into the cloister of his monastery. Had we seen the Temple of the Moon? Off this Christian cloister, the oldest in Cuzco, was a perfect Incaic room, cold and cheerless but with a dignity no Spanish architect could rival. In some places the stones had been taken away; now they were restored. Plainly, the monk was proud of these ruins. It was part of the heritage of the Dominicans.

Did he remember how Pizarro's Father Valverde entered these walls and swore that they should be consecrated to a greater God? That this same Padre had absolved the conquerors in the name of the church as they went to slaughter the Incas? Perhaps so; and perhaps he also remembered that the Father had met his end at the hands of Indians in Ecuador, as he was proceeding to Spain to be honored for his part in the conquest. . . .

Slowly we had formed a picture of this civilization. The grandeur and glory of it we had imagined as we stood on the fortress of Sacsaihuamán. The administration and the communal holding of land we had sensed that day as we drank *chicha* with the Indians in the wild upland country. Other vestiges of the old life we had seen in the very foundations of Cuzco's houses of today, and in this Monastery of Santo Domingo. Actually, these were the elements, combined with

this richly symbolic religion, which spelled the Incas' power.

We stood talking to the monk, who was not at all averse to praising them. First of all, the masonry is unequaled anywhere at any period. Their textiles rival the best; and their

system of government, hierarchical as their religion but infinitely benevolent, worked as well as most governments today — or better.

"Of course," the monk reminded us, "they did not know the principle of the wheel, and they had neither writing nor domestic animals. We can hardly understand their not having eggs and butter and milk — but in Europe at that time they had no potatoes!"

Europe from the twelfth century to the sixteenth: crude in many ways, too. Spain as we know it today was an upstart kingdom. The Bible had just been translated into a language which the people understood. No country in western Europe was as unified as that of Tahuantinsuyo. European kings were living in palaces, and there were Renaissance paintings upon their walls and in the great Gothic cathedrals; yet as a religious outlet the Crusades had degenerated into the Inquisition. There was unbelievable squalor and

ignorance. In a word, Europe was no worse but little better than the Inca kingdom. If Inca Pachacutec ("he who changes the world") had lived one hundred years later, when Pizarro came. . . .

"Cuzco is great," the monk told us, "but you cannot understand the greatness altogether until you have seen the greatest valley they conquered — the Vilcanota."

"We are going through it to Machu Pichu, probably tomorrow."

"That is very good. I have heard travelers say that to see that place was the greatest experience of their lives."

MACHU PICHU
N
OLLANTAITAMBO
VILCANOTA
URUBAMBA
YUCAI
RIVER
= MULE
= TRAIN
= BUS
= FOOT
CUZCO
TO LAKE TITICACA

VILCANOTA

SACRED VALLEY OF THE INCAS

Cuzco is disappearing below us in the blue morning haze which covers the valley. Our little train bearing us to Machu Pichu puffs up the steep gradient, then halts and backs into the next incline: by this ingenious zig-zag method, much time is saved. We are climbing towards the north; to our right lies Sacsaihuamán.

An archway across the tracks proclaims that we have come to the summit: fourteen thousand feet. Ahead now lies the bleak upland country topped by snow-capped mountains. We are riding in style, first class, with a Franciscan monk in his brown robe and a few men and women. As we stop at each station Indian women come to our window beseeching us to buy round white cheeses made from goat's milk.

Here is a station where tables are set beside the track, full of roast pork (often a whole head), with steaks and peppers and onions and potatoes.

Already we have started to go down, and presently we join a small stream which noisily roars northward with us. For

some reason, this seems strange. It is a tributary of the Vilcanota, flowing through a dozen rivers until it finally reaches the Amazon.

At kilometer 48, switching back to go downgrade, the train suddenly stops with a jolt and a crash. All the passengers jump to the ground. It is nothing at all: the last car, a freight, has simply jumped the track at the switch!

In an hour the brakeman, the conductor and a few of us have coaxed the wheels back on the track again by putting stones along the ties at judicious intervals. As we descend now into the gorge we watch with a strange feeling of excitement the increasing amount of vegetation and the stone houses, so like Inca masonry, with their low-hanging grass roofs. On the other side of the gorge is a steep and foot-wide trail — insignificant looking, but an important link during Inca times. This trail once traversed the length of the Empire from northern Peru to southern Chile, crossed by another *camino,* down which Pizarro came, but starting deep in Ecuador and leading straight to the Argentinian town of Tucumán. Swift runners could bring news to Cuzco in five days, running of course in short relays: a telegram today would hardly be much quicker. The backbone of the Empire, the greatest single factor in co-ordinating a mighty state. . . .

Now the valley widens, becomes fertile. And we pass under the shadow of a sheer, green rock. Here the Vilcanota River joins us in a rush of foaming water just before we come to a curious amphitheater bisected by the tracks: we are seeing our first terraces.

They climb the mountainsides, each rise carefully faced with neat masonry, each step green with fields and fruit trees. This is Ollantaitambo, long an outpost even after the Incas had conquered all valleys in every other direction.

A young Indian is standing by the station, his flaring pancake *montera* set upon his ear-tab cap, his shoulders covered with a red poncho thinly striped in blue and yellow. He is

wearing homespun knee breeches, his bronze legs end in thin leather sandals. All about are women in their heavy skirts and endless petticoats, spinning, spinning, as they gaze at our little train.

Tomorrow we shall return to this, but now we have eyes only for the view ahead: a great snow-capped peak which has torn the blue fabric of the sky, rising above these lesser mountains, flaunting its height.

It is definitely warmer and we are still going downgrade. At the end of the line we shall be at little more than six thousand feet, half Cuzco's altitude. Now blue-green maguey is lining the fields, the century plant which graces all the tropical zones from Mexico to Bolivia. Purple mountains rear their heads to the clouds, but beside our windows are bright red and yellow flowers — so close that we reach out and pick them: they smell like clover. The mountains have closed in on us so that we must actually pull in our elbows at every curve. At this point we pass an Incaic door, hewn out of the natural rock, through which we can see into a cavern which once served as a station for the relay runners.

The little stations become mere collections of thatched houses, and the goat-herders' cheese is supplanted by *granadas,* pomegranates whose mucous-covered seeds taste like strawberries. As we stop, the sound of the Vilcanota rumbling over boulders and weaving down the canyon eclipses all other sounds. Suddenly, without warning, the banks become covered with luxuriant foliage: there are ferns, and waterfalls driving down over moss, and great exotic leaf-forms which we have not seen in such abundance since leaving Rio so many thousands of miles away. The air is filled with fragrance. . . .

We have arrived. At La Máquina, a group of shanties left over from the days when work on the railroad was abandoned at this point. Beyond is Santa Ana; buses are full before we are out of our coach. But we are not going there. We appeal to a little boy. Yes, he will show us the way to Machu Pichu.

The road leads out through a wedge-like slit in the green mountains, so near and so high we must bend back at right angles to see their summits. Presently we cross a mountain stream on a perilous suspension bridge, and begin the ascent.

Only vaguely knowing what we are going to see, more particularly concerned with climbing a very steep trail under a blazing tropical sun, still we tingle with excitement: this is a pilgrimage. Nowhere else have we felt the same anticipation.

Nowhere else, frankly, have we so felt the force of the sun and the altitude. The little boy tactfully stops to point out the scenery. Already the Vilcanota is a small ribbon in the canyon below, and rising from its opposite bank is the green hump they call *Media Naranja,* the Half-Orange. Already we see how the peaks are thrusting up about us, enclosing us. . . .

There are many wonders of the world. We are even prepared to be undogmatic to the point of admitting that each person may have his favorites.

But as we stand here at the summit of Machu Pichu we can imagine no greater beauty. We look down a hundred feet to the blade-like saddle which holds this citadel, last stronghold of the Incas when the Spaniards came, and just beyond it to the towering needle point called Huaina Pichu. Two thousand feet below, like a silver thread twisting through the green-black canyon, is the Vilcanota, circling around the base, transforming Machu Pichu and its accompanying peak into a tall peninsula before it flows off westward through the gorge. Across and all around, pushing upwards, are giant peaks, new-born as geological ages go. Thrusting up their points like bayonets.

This is our first glimpse; we have scrambled up to the top to see it as a whole. Now we begin to explore, winding down the great central stairway beside which runs a stone trough for water with a catch-basin at each level. Here is a fort, the

stones fitted smoothly to its circular plan. And beneath it a curious chamber carved from one tremendous boulder. No mortar, no tools save small bronze hatchets were used in its making, and yet our engineers and masons could hardly duplicate it today. . . . Above and beyond is the temple with a megalithic altar and three windows looking straight down upon the river. On every side are terraces, such as we first saw at Ollantaitambo, but here descending almost vertically. And upon every gabled end of a house are two protuberances, part of the stone wall, upon which were hung the roof supports.

Houses all of white granite. Clustered together into two groups, one beside the temple, the other across a space grown high with weeds and wild melons, reached by another long flight of stairs. There is a plan, a carefully arranged plan suitable to the terrain; but there is no need to describe, if that were even possible, its exact conception. Without the setting, of course, it would be less breath-taking, yet the fascination of it comes from something else: we should like to have lived in this place, we should like to build such an intricate arrangement of rooms at every level, luxuriously combining a dozen one-room houses. This is praise deserved by few ruined cities.

Our little boy has left us and we stay to watch the sun set. Turning the one snow-capped mountain to the east into a flaming torch, changing the greenness all at once into orange form and purple shadow, pouring towards us out of the transverse valley to the west, staining the houses until once more there seems to be blood on the sacrificial altar. . . .

There is a hotel at Machu Pichu! On the sloping mountainside, beyond the last series of terraces, is a modern house built in the fashion of these Inca dwellings. The same trapezoidal doors and windows, yet it is not the same. Thick mortar oozes out between the stones, and the roof is of galvanized iron. A bearded man and his handsome half-Indian

wife are the only people living here, and they accept guests. It is a government project, not yet completed. We have been told we may have the one bed; at present there is no more furniture. At that, there is a bathroom, such as we have not seen since — since — but our memories are not long enough.

Some day, more than students and writers and a few independent travelers will come to sign the guest book. If so, our guess is that Bermuda will lose caste. "We're flying to Cuzco for our honeymoon. Staying at Machu Pichu, you know." We suggest this scene for any blissful couple. In the accepted sense, there is nothing at all to do. Which should quickly put an end to all ephemeral attachments.

Dinner by candlelight on the open porch, looking out at vague black forms, smelling grass-odors which come with the heavy evening mist. Our host is more than solicitous. He has not been here very long, though it was twenty-five years ago that Professor Bingham of Yale first uncovered the citadel. We talk of the masonry and its possible age. Latins are very prone to multiply by two or three, but our host concedes the archeologist's opinion that the finish of the work, the perfect gables, and the fact that the valley was not conquered until the middle of the fifteenth century, all point to late Incaic construction, probably during the great Pachacutec's reign. Yet — the setting is so perfect, someone must have lived here before.

There is plenty of time to think this over. When we go to our bedroom we find the bed is certainly too narrow for both of us — a tight squeeze for one. So, flipping a coin, Bowman loses and takes to the stone floor with our two blankets. For a couple of hours, while adjusting himself, he has time to consider. Especially he wonders which will arrive here first, the long-delayed furniture or the initial honeymooners. . . .

Morning — six o'clock. Already it is light outside, but the sun will not rise above the peaks for another hour. Wading through the wet grass, we come to the temple. Although the mist-clouds hover in the valley to our right, cloaking the mountains, down the opposing western canyon all is clear.

And as we stand here a scene opens up before our eyes. Like a curtain rising upon a stage. Or better — like a vision. The sun, which is not yet blinding us with its white light, has caught a distant range of snow peaks which yesterday were obscured by clouds. Gradually the gold pours down the mountainside. There is the freshness of morning, the colors are new, the air has been washed clean.

We turn to the east. The mist is rising out of the gorge and shafts of light break through its swirling veil behind the Half-Orange. For the first time we see the ruins on the sharp summit of Huaina Pichu.

How did they manage to climb to that pinnacle? Our host has said there is no water, and yet plainly we can see the neat rows of terraces. But we forget: these are mountain people, heights are to them as a smooth, level roadway is to us. It is more mystifying to imagine how this citadel was ever stormed. There are tales that a great cataclysm in the earth suddenly closed in their deep wells.

Now the sun has come over the snow peak to the east, and we are dazzled. The houses, the fort, the temple throw long blue shadows. Perhaps some day we shall see another scene as beautiful, but this morning, as the peaks assume their greenness, as the bright sun burns away the mist and the sacred Vilcanota becomes again a shimmering silver serpent — this morning we know that for all the rest of our lives we can only say of any other scene, " This is nearly as beautiful as Machu Pichu." . . .

Like a great stadium reared against the mountainside, the terraced fort of Ollantaitambo overlooks the right-angled juncture of its side-valley with the valley of the Vilcanota. Below it, in the narrow wedge that marks the opening to the smaller valley, lies the village of a few hundred Indians, the narrow lanes between the houses still defined by the Incaic walls which help to surround the little barnyards where the burros feed. A sleepy, quiet village with spindly eucalyptus scattered through it and one bunch of forlorn green foliage in the middle of a barren *plaza*. Once this village and its fort were the stronghold of a rich, populated valley — today only the little stream boils through between the houses with the same enthusiasm it has always had.

We wandered through the town and across the stream, then under a stone portal to begin the steep ascent of the many-terraced fortress. We made the climb to the top by a series of steps leading from one terrace to the next until we reached a splendid wall of masonry punctuated with niches. Above it was the temple, protected by sheer walls which rose on two sides of its triangular eminence. And on the next level were still standing the most colossal walls of all Incaic work, gigantic monolithic slabs three times the height of a man, separated vertically by thin stones.

From here, the valley of the Vilcanota spread out on one side below us, revealing the neat pattern of the eucalyptus which divided the fields. Across the rushing stream we saw the old quarry: how was it possible to transport these tremendous slabs of pink stone across an unfordable river? There are always so many unanswered questions, even the archeologists must only guess.

Climbing about, we found three kinds of stone: the favorite steel-grey so much used in Cuzco, a bright red, and a green which evidently denoted the prevalence of copper in the mountains. Along the mountainsides were gabled houses, used by the soldiers for lookout posts in time of siege. More

of them were on the opposite side, across the little valley, their plastered walls hardly discernible from the mountain: these were for the sentinels, and also for prisoners.

Gingerly we followed a high trail that led inward along the wall of the side-valley, above the terraces. Even the valley floor below was terraced. Scrambling higher, our clothes catching on thorns which pierced our legs like pins, we saw the shape of this wedge of fields, halted by a row of mountains at the east end. Across this row, perhaps over another less lofty range, are tropics, nearly the jungles of Brazil. For this part of the Andes, sloping towards the Amazon water-shed, is called the *ceja de la montaña,* the " eyebrow of the hot places."

Probably nothing new can be discovered above ground near these ruins, yet we had an unmistakable feeling of exploration as, slipping, sliding down into the valley, we happened upon houses, benches and stairways carved in the stone. And about them, lying casually upon the ground as if the workmen had left them a moment before, were magnificent square-cut stones.

We crossed the fields, jumping down from each terrace until we were beside the noisy little brook which runs down to the Vilcanota. On the opposite side, grazing on a narrow shelf beneath the mountains, were several cows tended by a small Indian boy. There seemed to be no way across; they were marooned. But so the Indian always is, in these Andean valleys. His gods have told him: You are here, and you and your children and children after that shall live here always.

It is no punishment. As we came down a by-lane into town, we wished that we might return again some day to spend a very long time. The street we had happened upon was pure Incaic. In the *plaza* there were plastered houses, Spanish-fashion. But here, absolutely nothing but stone houses, presenting a sloping doorway or the profile of a gable, just as at Machu Pichu: masonry antedating the

squared style, always polygonal, each angle so exactly fitted to the next. A flock of sheep came towards us, crowded between the narrow Inca walls; all the Indians spoke to us, doffing their hats and murmuring *buenas tardes.* Here they wore only brown ponchos, with red or green stripes at the borders, and upon every woman's back was a bundle — or a baby — strapped in by her short *lliclla,* which came around and knotted at her throat.

In the principal store where we had gone in search of some sugar cane liquor, *aguardiente de caña,* we found our hotel keeper. He gave us a packing box to sit on.

"Have they unearthed much in the ruins?" we asked.

"*Como no!* Last year, they found a beautiful mummy — didn't you see him in the museum at Cuzco? All of his cooking utensils too. You saw the ladles of clay, with their handles made of llama heads? And the painted wooden bowls? Many of those came from here. But there is much yet to be done, they are still excavating."

Together we walked down the tree-lined lane to the little hotel at the railway station. The wind was coming through the valley, rushing towards the cold white peaks to the north. Yet always it was good weather here, the *patrón* said. They could grow crops the year round. Yes, no wonder this was the Sacred Valley.

Directly after dinner we were given a candle and shown up to our room. It was suggested that everyone went to bed early. A little resentfully we blew out our candle and cautiously crept down the outside stairs. The night was clear and cool; under the bright stars, we could feel rather than see the mountains looming up on every side.

As we reached the bottom of the stairs, Dickinson suddenly let out a blood-curdling yell. A dog began barking.

The whole family rushed down to us, candles in hand. There stood Dickinson, half in shorts and half in trousers. And there stood the dog, with a mouthful of khaki.

The wife of the hotel keeper wrung her hands in consternation, pouring out profuse apologies. "I shall mend it, you shall never know that it was done, *señor*."

One boy, one horse, one mule: the next morning found us setting off on another lap through the Sacred Valley towards Urubamba, Bowman beating his lazy mule, Dickinson and the little guide riding double on a dejected horse. At the sheer green rock below Ollantaitambo we had turned to the east, following along beside the widening river. Already in the sun it was hot, but under the shadow of the hovering mountains we felt the chill of high altitudes. The little boy was hanging on to Dickinson for dear life, his brown poncho flapping and his thin sandals barely clinging to his dirty feet.

In the valley lay rich lands all the way now, the banks bordered with the clover-smelling *retama,* a green reed-like stalk descending from a flower shaped like a minute iris; yet

the mountains had become red and white, almost a duplicate of those in Arizona. The Indians who passed us on their way to market at Ollantaitambo alone gave a foreign note to the scene.

As we topped a knoll, a green valley stretched ahead of us, and our path began to lead along stone walls: surely we were nearly there. *Más adelante,* our small guide told us, and for two hours we jogged on into this pleasant land. Winding along the stream — the boy said there were many fish here, but he was more excited over a dead and bloated burro which had caught in a snag at the river's bend.

Every house had a curious sign hung out: if they sold bread it was a crown of the green stems of the *retama* (which they also used to thatch their roofs) ; a bouquet of red carnations and white easter lilies signified *chicha* was for sale; and a white flag meant the *aguardiente.* Through a perfect row of eucalyptus we could see the glistening snow peaks again, bright triangles between two converging mountains.

Every house we passed was much the same as the next. Each one with its store of corn husks, usually piled in the low branches of a tree. Chickens, a dog, a burro or two. The completely simple life, the most rudimentary sort of existence. For an Indian of his own free will never works too hard in these valleys. It is not that nature could not give him more if he applied himself, but he is replete with its very beauty. Only in ugly lands do people work feverishly, hiding from themselves a harsh, distasteful environment.

Certainly this Sunday Urubamba held a happy population. From every house as we clattered across the cobblestones we could hear talk and laughter. A dozen little bands were going from door to door, playing for a round of *chicha.* People inside seated upon the floor. And from the windows, their only chimneys, issued pale wisps of smoke.

Late that afternoon, after we had had a bath in the cold stream beyond the town, we fell to talking with the young

man who ran the most popular store in town. He was one of that small percentage of Latins who understand and like the Indians. His father had given him a good education in Cuzco, and now José had come here to eke out a living.

In the States we would have called him smart, but in the Latin psychology you can be only either cruel or kind; José was kind. Until supper time, and again that evening, we talked with him while he waited on his customers, cutting down a candle suspended by its wick, or doling out half a pound of sugar or coffee or chocolate. And with every purchase he gave to the children — or the Indians — a bit of hard candy. That was smart. All the children came to him

when sent out to buy. Yet he was more amused than proud of his smartness. Purposely he would withhold the candy until the customer reminded him. He had a cheerful word for everyone and his favorites were given a candle and a half for the price of one. That was his kindness.

"You can see by the way they buy how poor they are," he remarked. "If they have a little money they will not work again until it is gone. That is Indian psychology; I expect you have heard that said before many times." He stopped to open a package of cigarettes and deal out three. "Another government monopoly," he sighed.

We had noticed that, unlike Bolivia or any other country, Peru offered no cheap cigarettes. These and matches and salt were strictly government monopolies. "But why don't they make a cheap cigarette for the Indian?" we asked. "He can't afford these — they're nearly as expensive as American cigarettes. And in the States everyone has more money to spend. Even the unemployed."

"Everyone in the country would buy the cheap ones. And besides, who cares about the Indians? Certainly not the politicians in Lima," he answered.

"But they want the Indian to stop chewing *coca*, and they say he drinks too much of the *aguardiente*." José had two great tuns of the liquor, each holding a hundred and fifty quarts; half the time he was around the counter, selling it.

"They do not care at all." He did not speak bitterly, but with conviction.

"What about the *Apristas* in the coming election?"

José shrugged. "If they have too large a following they will not be allowed to vote. What could they do for the Indians anyway?"

"Isn't it possible to do as much for them as the Incas did? Certainly the Indian always seems to need a leader."

He shook his head. "I cannot say. All I know is that only in a very good month do I myself make as much as two hundred *soles* — fifty of your American dollars. And I must

buy everything with that. Soon I am going to leave here. I shall go to Mollendo or Arequipa — you will be going through those towns on your way to Lima."

"We wanted to go overland by mule, but it is impossibly expensive and takes a very long time."

"Yes, I know. We are shut off from our own capital. No Indian on this side wants to go across the mountains to Huancayo, where you can catch a train for Lima. He does not go any farther than his nearest market, and that is Cuzco."

We remembered the isolation of Trinidad and Santa Cruz, in Bolivia. "But Peru is not so poor," we said.

"You mean Lima is not poor. Even with rich lands, the Indian is always poor."

The next day we had the other side of the picture to consider. José knew that the government was indifferent to the Indian — knowledge born from actual experience in a half-Indian community. But a hint suggestive of the future came to us at Yucai, a little town up the valley to which we walked.

Physically as beautiful a spot as any rural community in any part of the world. Poplars and willows line the streams and irrigation ditches. Along the road are pleasant, newly painted houses, successively cream-colored, pale blue or yellow. An old church is nestled in a thick stand of trees whose dark green leaves glisten in the sun. Across the meadow which serves as a *plaza* the Indians drive their cows and goats and sheep. Here the valley has opened up to its full width; the terrain is a patchwork of rich fields and stone fences. No wonder the Incas built their summer palace here.

Up the sloping valley, away from the stream and the town, we came upon a series of terraces surmounted by white-painted farm buildings. Below us was nothing but maize grown in the Indians' field, but here were planted asparagus and beets, cabbages, carrots, lettuce, tomatoes and celery. Wondering, we approached the buildings.

In a great farmyard dozens of young Indian boys were busy over every kind of job. Some were cleaning stables, others pitching manure, helping to grind wheat or feeding the stock. In neatly penned houses, each with a name over the door, we found the animals: Duroc Jersey and Poland China hogs; Leghorn, Plymouth Rock, Rhode Island Red and Wyandotte chickens; Shropshire, Rambouillet and Corriedale sheep; Belgian hares and "angora" rabbits; pigeons and ducks and turkeys and geese.

Remember, this was Peru: that was what startled us. And then we saw one of the priests. Only his shaved pate and his black robe (although that was worn short, tucked out of the way in his girdle) — only those two things gave a clue to his clerical office. For his face was tanned by the sun and his hands were those of a farmer. He nodded to us pleasantly but shortly; as if to say he had no time to chat, there was work to be done.

A sign by the gate said it was an experimental farm for the youth of the village, presided over by the Salesian re-

ligious order. One farm in one small valley out of all Peru. But if this was to have any significance in the future, not the church but the government must shoulder the responsibility.

Sitting with our legs dangling over a terrace, we began to argue: "Well, suppose the boys do learn. Their fathers will not understand, and they have no money to buy such fine stock, or even seeds."

"You can't take away knowledge. They won't forget."

No more than they will forget everything that the Incas had taught them: as long as there are grey stones in green valleys, as long as Quechua is still spoken in these mountains.

Nor shall we forget, as long as we have memories. The Vilcanota flowing northward, downward, through the Sacred Valley. Past these fertile fields of Yucai and Urubamba, past the guardian fortress of Ollantaitambo, down into the lushness of the deeper gorge. In our minds today, as fresh as when we first saw it, we can see the peaks shooting up into the blue sky, above this shining Vilcanota surrounding Machu Pichu, that unlisted wonder of the world.

THE PADRE TALKS

Once more we had made a transition, descending from the Andes to the desert, the arid coastal plain. From Cuzco to Lima: two of the oldest names on the American continent.

We had come back across a mountain pass higher than Pike's Peak and into the cold grey town of Juliaca, where we had left the train which rolls on to Puno on Titicaca, and instead turned westward, down to a mere 7,500 feet at Arequipa — Arequipa with its businesslike personality but with its fine volcano, El Misti, looking like Fujiyama in the early morning light. Then rapidly descending through barren mountains which wore away to dry desert; rock changing to shifting grey sands.

And yet, through all this barrenness of mountain and desert, the green and fertile valleys: of Vilcamayu below Cuzco, and the deep and equally green canyon of the Rio Vitor below Arequipa. At La Joya, only four thousand feet high, we came upon the new government irrigation project. Amidst this loneliness, this desolate solitude which is so much more

fearsome than the tallest mountains. Where guavas and oranges and *chirimoyas* were for sale.

As if Peru had just begun to realize her possibilities. As if she had suddenly remembered what the Incas had accomplished. Mountains and Indians and valleys: the same elements as in the days of the Empire of Tahuantinsuyo. Civilization because there was once fertility along this coast; the snows brought down from the high places to irrigate. . . .

The blue Pacific was so heavy with mist that its horizon was lost as we first viewed it long before we wound down the silver and rust mountains to reach the coast. A journey across a continent — but not yet completed: again we would see the mountains at Huancayo.

It was not at all a clear, tropical coast. The surf just beyond the railroad track thundered and pounded unmercifully upon black rocks and grey sand. Two forces had met, ocean and mountains. And neither had won or ever would. The Andes may have softened, but they are still very much there. Yet a certain degeneracy seemed to have communicated itself to the people. Mollendo we found a miserable little port mostly of wooden shacks, with palm trees incongruously gracing a small *plaza*. One freighter was riding uneasily in the open roadstead. And to bear testimony to the merciless surf, the municipality had built a swimming pool!

We were not enchanted, and when we found the freighter, a German ship bound for the Old Country, was to sail that very afternoon, we took our luggage to the dock. There lighters, tossing like corks on the boisterous waves, were being loaded with llama wool. One moment they were thirty feet below us; the next, nearly upon the dock. At last a crane ceased its work and picked up a chair — with us and all our luggage — and we were unceremoniously and literally dumped, head first, baggage on top, into the heaving launch below. . . .

That night there was German pilsener and a dinner such as we had not had since Rio, on the other coast. The little old

professor across from us seemed to have gone equally long without European cooking; his napkin was up to his chin, and his chin nearly in every dish. The priest who sat beside him greeted us amiably in Spanish.

There was something inexplicably urbane about the Padre, although his weathered face went strangely with his white hair and his black robe. On the deck that evening as we

watched the stevedores (for of course we were late in getting off), we found that he was a naturalist and had spent most of the last thirty years out of doors, collecting birds for Peruvian and Bolivian museums. There was nowhere he had not been, and he spoke Quechua as fluently as he did Spanish, though he had been born in Alsace-Lorraine.

" I wish I could show you some of the relics I've collected," he said. " Not my birds so much as some of the odd things, like Indian heads. You've probably heard of the barbaric custom they have of mummifying their enemies' heads.

When I was up on the Madre de Dios River, in the Bolivian Territory of the Colonies — wild country, you know — I saw them do it. The heads are shriveled to the size of a small coconut, yet the features remain absolutely perfect. The head is filled with some kind of herbs — what the preparation is I could never find out. Then day after day it is pressed and rolled and set in the shade, never the sun, to dry out. . . . But those Indians are pure savages. I find the ones on this side of the mountains more interesting."

" How susceptible are they to your teachings? These who live back in the mountains, that is? "

The Padre shook his head. " In some ways, I am afraid not susceptible at all. In the matter of sickness, for example. They have their own medicine men. Sometimes they survive despite superstitions. In Juliaca a man was dying of typhus. They would not let me bring a doctor, for when they are sick they believe the medicine man must return the soul to their bodies. So they had made this patient's room airtight, for fear his soul would escape. Finally I brought the doctor anyway, and we broke down the door. What do you think the medicine man had been giving him? Frog bladders and green ink! He had managed to swallow a good deal, but the green was all over his face and clothes. Frankly, I almost laughed. Yet the poor creature was obviously about to die. . . . I despair to make them understand."

" All that is a hangover from Incaic times, isn't it? We've read that the Incas early recognized herbalists and soothsayers."

" Ah, yes, the Incas! " the Padre answered abstractedly. Yet he did not seem the type to be intolerant. We asked a leading question to sound him out. " You have come down from Cuzco," he replied. " Up there it is only the Incas. I admit they erected a great empire. But — did you know there were other cultures up and down this very coast? A hundred years before Christ! " We walked back and forth the length of the deck before he went on. " All of them were

eventually conquered by the Incas, but not until the end of the fourteenth century. It was a terrific task, and the mountain peoples could not stand the hot climate — "

" Like the Bolivians in the Chaco."

" Exactly. I hope you did not have the misfortune to go there. I did. . . . But, as I was saying, the men were so quickly exhausted that they had to be relieved at frequent intervals. . . ." Then suddenly, " Tomorrow we stop at Pisco for cotton." He laughed. " Yes, I see you know the name, that is where the liquor comes from. Why don't you go ashore? We shall be there all day. I want to hear what you say about it. And now I must say good-night." With that, and an abrupt nod, he strode off to his cabin.

We went ashore the next morning; the boat had anchored before breakfast. A little wonderingly we watched the advancing shore line, nearly covered with mist which came from the sloping hills beyond. The sky was overcast. It was a dismal spot. Another Mollendo, we decided. Why should anyone live here when the clear mountains were so close?

It is no fun traveling if you do not often have to eat your own words. By the time we had walked down the long dock which thrust out into the shallow water, and walked even farther, much farther, into the town proper, the sun was shining with all the ripe brilliance it has in any tropical land. The *plaza* was clean and fitting. Tall graceful trees with white trunks branched their shining leaves over the walk: in form they were like no others we had seen except the beautiful India laurels of Taxco, in Mexico. And from the middle of the *plaza* rose straight palm trees, through which we saw the blazing white front of a church. Loaded buses were carrying people back to Ica, the capital of the state.

But we contented ourselves with a swim, out along the grey sand beach. . . .

That night at dinner the Padre asked for an accounting. " Not as bad as we thought, but. . . ."

" You are still unconvinced! Even if we had been lucky

enough to stop where there are ruins, I admit you might still have been unimpressed after Cuzco and Machu Pichu. I know, for I have been up and down this coast. Yet there are places, green valleys fed by the snows. Over forty rivers empty into the Pacific in Peru alone, I believe."

" Yet can they have had such a civilization as — "

The Padre nodded, pushing a book towards us. " If you were to spend years tramping up and down the coast you would not understand what they have done as well as if you looked through that book. Or went to a museum."

We had begun leafing through until we came to an illustration, a fat-bellied pot with two spouts joined by a bridge.

The designs seemed to be chiefly conventionalized, grotesque dragons.

" Unfortunately, you cannot see the color," the Padre said. " You must see them at the museum in Lima. At first sight they may look primitive, but they are really the work of a highly sophisticated people — at least in an artistic sense.

Probably under the deep influence of a very symbolic religion. There's no use even showing you mere photographs of their textiles."

" We've seen some of the Inca work in Cuzco."

" And that probably, especially if it was cotton, came from the coast — from either Pisco valley or one near it. Early

Nazca culture, the scholars call it. And all that was done before the sixth century."

He leaned back in his chair, lighting a cigarette. Although his hands were rough and very brown they had delicate fingers, accustomed to smoothing the feathers of birds after he had gone through the difficult task of stuffing them. " Turn back a bit to the Early Chimu ceramics," he suggested. " See the change? An entirely independent culture, but of the same period. From the northern coast, those are."

" They seem perfectly preserved! " we exclaimed even before we remarked the fine portrait-heads which formed the bodies of these curious vases.

" You can see hundreds of them, just as intact. Notice what they call the stirrup-spout. Leaf through there: you'll find pictures of warriors and prisoners, and landscapes too, all in vase form. Even of women giving birth to children. It's a decided help to the historian when a culture has realistic pottery. You won't get much of a clue to Incaic life, for instance, from their *aryballus.*"

" Are you historian, too? " we laughed.

" Far from it! Just like to inquire into the dust of the ages now and then so I'll appreciate my live birds all the more."

We arose from the table and went out into the cool night. For a while we talked of miscellaneous things, until finally the subject came again to the Indians.

" Personally," the Padre admitted, " I can offer no solution for the Indians' improvement — materially. I've lived among them long enough to consider them as so many human beings. What use is it to group them all together and speak of the ' Indian problem '? Actually, although as you know the same Indians live in both Bolivia and Peru, there is a vast difference, geographically considered."

" But," we broke in, " isn't Peru more consolidated, hasn't she perhaps a better chance for a future, for some kind of amalgamation? That is, for fitting the Indian into her scheme of things? "

" You're talking politics. Let me answer you on geographical grounds. Geography is fact, and is more durable than politics. . . . Now take Bolivia. You and I have seen Indians not only in the mountains there, but in La Paz. Of course, no capital is a perfect expression of its country, but La Paz has the advantage of being in the mountains, with a large Indian population. In Peru, the difference is that Lima is on the coast. You cannot show me a face there with even

half-pure Indian features. Lima is Spanish and its psychology is still colonial. It is as if Bolivia had chosen Trinidad in the Beni for its capital. Lima is that cut off. Don't accept my word for it, but when you go into the mountains again on your way to Huancayo, think of what I say."

" Then you believe Bolivia has more of a future, on geographical grounds? "

The Padre threw up his hands. " I give you one contributing factor, that is all. I know only history and geography. Politics I decline to discuss."

" But these coastal people with their old cultures? What's become of them? "

The Padre laughed softly. " That's where my comparison of them with the Incas breaks down. They are no longer, they have been pushed back, or they have inter-married until their old characteristics are entirely gone. Only the mountain peoples are still pure-blooded. But the mountains, remember, make up the greatest part of Peru."

LIMA

Today is the twenty-eighth of July, the beginning of the three-day national fiesta to celebrate Peru's independence from Spain. One hundred and fifteen years ago.

We are standing this morning under one of the old wooden balconies which helps to form the arcades about the Plaza de Armas. To our right is the great cathedral, looking out upon the palm-filled square. The crowd about us stirs: there are sounds of a bugle corps from one of the narrow entering streets. Already on the high platform before the cathedral doors are two groups of soldiers and sailors, the army in deep blue, with red feathers in their tall cadet hats.

The sound of horses' hoofs on the smooth pavements even before they round the corner, coming into the *plaza.* The officers, their khaki uniforms with the drum-head caps and flaring coat-skirts of French design, their gleaming sabers raised. The horses, all of them chestnuts or sorrels, might have come from some private riding stable, they are so well-bred and perfectly groomed. . . . The infantry passes, the

signal corps, the Red Cross units, the mules with their seventy-fives dismantled, strapped to their backs. And more bands, until the air is full of conflicting tunes and rhythms. The *plaza* is filling.

And now around the corner come the first cars: admirals in their cocked hats, generals in dress uniforms, diplomats with bright sashes across white shirts, in evening clothes. Gold braid, shining medals, blue cloth, and the great red-white-red vertical stripes of the Peruvian flag. The cathedral bells begin to toll; for a moment the bands are still, the soldiers lining the *plaza* streets on both sides come to attention, and then, in unison, all the bands strike up the national anthem. The choir boys have come out of the archbishop's baroque palace beside the cathedral, the clergy in their gorgeous purple and red robes follow them into the nave.

From across the square, out of the President's palace come the lancers, the guards of honor. Through the palms we see at first only their raised spears topped with red pennons, then as they round the corner, their gleaming silver helmets with flying red plumes, their black and red uniforms. They circle about the square. And behind them three coaches drawn by black horses, with four footmen, Peruvian cockades in their tall hats, their dark green livery and knee breeches against the black coach emblazoned with the coat of arms of the City of the Kings. The President and his ministers are arriving for the service.

On the cathedral's great platform stands the colossal bronze equestrian statue of Francisco Pizarro, founder of this city four centuries and one year ago. His helmet, his flying plumes, duplicate those of the lancers. Dominating the scene, dwarfing the squadrons, rising even above the great portals of the ivory-colored façade. The Spanish Founder whose bones lie within the cathedral. . . .

Born out of wedlock, unable to write his own name, a rough, swashbuckling adventurer. But of the mettle to dis-

cover a new continent. There were hundreds much like him. There was only one other who quite reached his stature: Hernando Cortés, Conqueror of Mexico. *Conquistadores,* both, in a very real sense.

And with Pizarro begins the story of a continent, and the story of Lima, which for two hundred years ruled South America. Not a score of years after Balboa, the first white man ever to see the Pacific, Pizarro was in northern Peru, had captured the Inca Atahualpa, and was planning to march the length of the country, down the spine of the Andes, to Cuzco. With five hundred men. In two more years, desirous of founding a city nearer the sea, his scouts brought him news of the " fertile and delicious " valley of Rimac, a name which the Spaniards corrupted into Lima.

It is useless to argue about Pizarro and his kind, who in the next decade explored enough of the continent to found nearly every important modern city. Against his arbitrary cruelty lay his sincere zeal for converting the Indians to Christianity, his generalship and his shrewd ability in founding a city, planning its streets in a regular manner totally unknown to Spaniards — even to the point of orienting the streets from northeast to southwest, so that one side of the street was always in the shade and the prevailing winds might have a free sweep. He was of the sort Machiavelli had just applauded in his *Il Principe.* Let later generations refine his work.

Lima became the seat of the first viceroy, the personal representative of the Spanish crown. In the Plaza de Armas, shortly after Pizarro was done to death, was held the first *auto-da-fé,* the dread torture of the Inquisition. Just as they held bullfights, which Pizarro loved: it is not generally known that he himself was a bullfighter, in those days when not professionals but noblemen were the great matadors. . . . By 1614 Lima had a population of 26,000. Half of it Negro slaves and one out of every nine a monk or priest. The town prospered, so much so that Drake and other pirates eyed it greedily. Until finally a great wall was erected, nine miles

of bastions, wide enough for two carriages to drive abreast, fronting the Rio Rimac, which flowed on down to the sea at the port-town of Callao. For two hundred years Lima was a fortified city. . . .

Spain's power increased, even as her position became more difficult to hold. Half the world, it seemed, was speaking Castilian. The viceroys of the Royal Audiencia of Lima grew more arbitrary in ruling a vast continent which was only partially settled. Yet in the cities, especially in Lima, were buildings which rivaled any in Spain. In the early years of the eighteenth century, the Torre Tagle Palace was erected by the Marqués, who had earned his title capturing pirate ships. It still stands, the handsomest building in Lima; its Costa Rican black-wood balustrades and balconies ranged about a charming court of blue and yellow Sevilla tiles. The world, and even these new lands, was becoming more fond of good living. The *Conquistadores* gave way to rich landholders and merchants.

And then, in the middle of the century, Manuel de Amat became Viceroy. The " greatest Viceroy Spain ever sent to Lima." There is room for argument on that point. Yet Amat had glorious schemes: Lima was to become a garden city. On the other side of the river, beyond the great wall, he caused workmen to start building. But he is not remembered for that; his ideas did not reach completion. His name is subordinated to that of Perricholi.

Most of us had never heard of her, in the States, until Thornton Wilder published a romanticized account of her in his *Bridge of San Luis Rey*. Her real name was Micaela Villegas, and she was at the height of her popularity on the Limanian stage when Amat came. After that for fourteen years she was the mistress of this old libertine. Perricholi was Amat's way of pronouncing *perra chola,* a none too polite epithet he applied to her during their frequent — and public — tiffs. To be explicit, the words mean " half-breed bitch."

Doubtless she was the inspiration for his grandiose schemes.

For her he built the now ruined Paseo de Aguas, and for himself, the Quinta (Country House) de Presa, which is today restored, if only for use as the quarters of garrison officers: far less rococo than the Torre Tagle Palace, with beautiful dark oaken doors against white walls, floors of Moorish tile and a flower garden behind, where they say Perricholi held court and soothed the old codger.

A romantic story, very dear to Lima still. But significant, too. That there should be a viceroy whose word governed a whole continent, building sumptuous houses for a mistress whom he flaunted in every public place, spending a salary of half a million dollars a year. And when he left, going home at the age of eighty to marry a niece, being succeeded by other autocrats. In 1791 to entertain the new ruler, they killed two hundred bulls in the Plaza de Armas.

The United States had just been born. In France, they were about to storm the Bastille, divert an ideal into a Reign of Terror, and be subdued by that glorious anachronism, Napoleon. Who in turn would upset all Europe, place his brother Joseph on the Spanish throne, and complete the downfall and disorganization of that country. Not long before, the Jesuits had been expelled. In Cuzco, Tupac Amaru, a descendant of the Incas, had been killed for attempting a conspiracy, his limbs torn from his body by four horses. The world was on fire. In the next thirty years Spain was to lose all her New World colonies. And new ideas of government were to be carried into practice. . . .

It began, of course, slowly. Under the pretext of riding the storm which was shaking Spain, liberal men began to form *juntas,* or councils. There were conspiracies. Revolution broke out in Chile, and in Quito, Ecuador. Abascal, the new Viceroy, tightened his hold. This was 1810 — a movement foreshadowed in Cuzco five years before, when the memories of the Incas stirred a city dissatisfied with colonial rule.

At first all the danger points were far from Lima, for most of that city was loyal to a line of monarchs who were now

having their troubles with Napoleon, thousands of miles away.

Soon, however, two names blazed up like rockets into the night — except that they could not be extinguished. In Venezuela and Nueva Granada, Colombia, arose Simón Bolívar. Under his guidance a declaration of independence was signed, and he was designated Liberator. At the other end of the land, José de San Martín, who like Bolívar had been to Europe and had been inspired with revolutionary ideals, organized the Army of the Andes. After countless hardships he crossed at an unprotected pass into Chile, near Aconcagua, highest mountain in the Andes, inferior only to a few peaks in the Himalayas.

By this time Napoleon had been defeated at Waterloo, the Royalists had re-conquered many of the disaffected cities. But if the cause of liberty seemed dubious in all Latin America, its people were undaunted. In Tucumán, Argentina, a patriot victory had been gained; in Cochabamba the women had given their lives with those of their husbands; in Cuzco the clergy had sworn, " If God places one hand upon the things of the earth, in the revolution of Cuzco he places two." For the third time Venezuela had begun a war against the forces of the crown. And Chile, aided by San Martín's Andean army, had declared her independence. There are stories of individuals, lesser lights than the two great generals. Such as the modern Joan of Arc, Policarpa Salavarrieta of Colombia, who fought until she was captured and hanged. But for all this heartbreaking loyalty and martyrdom to a cause, for all the declarations of independence, the battle was far from won. It is too easy to look back now and call Spain's defeat inevitable.

An Argentine, an Irishman, a Scotchman and a Venezuelan were to effect Peru's deliverance. The Argentine, San Martín, persuaded the Scotchman and the Irishman, the one Lord Cochrane, the other O'Higgins, President of Chile, to

make an attack upon Lima's port of Callao. Cochrane became the Lafayette, or more accurately the de Grasse of South America. In a few months the Marqués de Torre Tagle, fourth of his line, had declared Peru's independence at the northern port-town of Trujillo. Then followed the Valley Forge of the war. At its end San Martín was in a position to demand that an independent oligarchy be established in Peru, composed of three persons, one of whom should be the viceroy, another himself. The royalists' refusal was in vain. On the 28th of July, 1821, Peru declared her independence.

Still, even as he was named Protector, San Martín felt the weakness of his position in this royalist stronghold. And a year later, in Guayaquil, Ecuador, the historic meeting between two great men, San Martín and Bolívar, took place.

Beyond a doubt, both of them selfless; each had refused honors more than once. Yet their ideas differed. If they had agreed, had put their forces together — but this is a useless speculation, one more of the suggestive "ifs" in history. San Martín believed in a monarchy; Bolívar was fighting for a confederation of Venezuela and Colombia and hoped for an even greater state. It was not to be: neither man won all that he wanted. San Martín returned to Peru and soon abdicated; if his ideas were not the will of a people, he would not stand in their way. And Bolívar, who had at first refused to come to Peru's aid, eventually did come, and became dictator — only long enough to see the battle of Ayacucho won in the high Andes.

That was the end, and the beginning. Through this last decisive battle Peru had effected her emancipation and that of all South America. In the United States, the Monroe Doctrine made clear that America was for the Americans. Now it was merely a matter of unfinished business: the provinces of Alto Peru declared their independence under the name of Bolivia and chose General Sucre as their first president. In Peru there was a transition to a full democracy. For here

" no base existed for founding a plutocratic oligarchy of great rural proprietors as in Chile, or a monarchy of royal family transplanted to America, as in Brazil." Spain vanished from the scene and a continent became eight great countries. . . .

As we stand here in the Plaza de Armas in Lima, witnessing this scene on Independence Day, we remember the words of the Padre: " Lima is Spanish, its psychology is still colonial." This pomp today is a bright relic from the past — and only that. The crowd is not overly impressed, no more than they might be at the pageantry of a moving picture. Lima *has been:* even with all her modern business and modern building, we hear this most of all.

Her exciting days are over? That is not probable. Not many years ago there was fighting in these very streets. The

days of the Leguía dictatorship are dead — some people mourn them. But if only a good, conservative candidate wins in this next election, they say, all will be well.

Several viceroys expressed similar devout wishes. Several kings have prayed for the pacification of the people. It is human nature that they should hope — and as a consequence, fail to hear the rumblings. For the world is changing again. Let us trust that we shall be more cognizant than were the royalists. . . .

It is rainy and misty in Lima: perhaps that is one reason for our feeling of depression, our belief in a more colorful age. Already in the ten days we have been here we have several times escaped to the sunshine at Chosica, only an hour's ride into the mountains: Pizarro should have placed his city there, away from the hovering mists which make the days of Lima quite different from those in Bahia on the other coast, at the same latitude. We have planned to go to Huancayo, to see the mountains for the last time. To see a whole country, not a coastal town.

HUANCAYO

INDIAN MARKET

Even in Cuzco, they have said: Huancayo has the finest market in all Peru — in all South America perhaps. So at the end of our trip we head back to the Andes, back to the mountains and the blue sky and the Indians. With a feeling of excitement we once more put on our ragged traveling clothes to return to the high country and to this most Indian of all towns.

Still, this bright Sunday morning, we are unprepared.

The main street of Huancayo is one mass of people. For half a mile its cobbled length is like a trough of the brightest colors on the earth in molten, writhing motion. As for an instant we stand at its edge, we see it impersonally and in all its scope. Then we enter, are engulfed, become part of it.

Sitting in the street, allowing only a narrow way, are the Indians and the storekeepers with their more pretentious stalls. Indians and *cholos* selling and buying, townspeople walking up and down. And the color: bright wools not yet spun, bright blankets, bright skirts and blouses of homespun

— magenta and green, scarlet and yellow, midnight blue and pink, wine-red and orange, and magenta again.

There is so much to see, the shapes and colors are so exciting, that we determinedly begin at one far end where are the rattletrap buses and the burros, which have brought in their great loads of terracotta jars and bowls, vases and dishes and decanters, all wrapped in fresh grass. Even yesterday the procession had begun, for some of these people come from a very long way: it is an old story that they will not part with their wares for any price before reaching town. . . .

Then past the *zapateros,* the shoemakers, past the women with their hats: pearl grey or reddish brown, with low, undented crowns and curling brims; or panamas, low-crowned with very wide brims, worn down in front, beautifully setting off their regular, handsome dark features: for all of the women are handsome, after the restrained Indian fashion. . . . Past the ponchos, black or coffee-brown with thin stripes. Past the line of rush-bottom chairs, some of them for sale, others for customers who wish shoe-shines. Past innumerable *helado* stands, sprinkled all along this course, where they shave ice for you and add a liquid color to harmonize with your costume. Past the women selling silver spoons and small hand-wrought llamas. And the stalls, now in greater numbers, with their blue factory-made overalls and their orange homespun cloths and woven magenta *lliclas* and green skirts. Near by sit the women who are making embroidered sleeves, a separate and varied item of the blouse. . . . Past booths full of plaid shirts or striped pyjamas, or novelties like celluloid dolls or tin horns. And trunks, made by hand, of every size. Down to the *frazadas,* loosely woven blankets full of bright figures upon a white background. And particularly, everywhere, women selling skeins of uncarded wool, and dyes, and the small shawls. Past llama and alpaca rugs of brown and white and black, the colors sewn into geometric patterns or animals. Past a man demonstrating a great harp such as they told us about in Puno; and others try-

ing out flutes of bamboo, four feet long: up and down we hear the mournful, drawn-out notes, and the lower ones of the trumpets, made of cow's horn, curled into a circle. . . . And on by the tinsmiths with their lanterns and painted intricate crosses which adorn the gable-ridge of every house. Past all this, until we come to the women selling *guampas.*

We have never seen these gourds before. Despite all we have heard about Huancayo, no one has mentioned them: it is as if they wanted us to be surprised. As if all this color were merely a prelude to these simple bowls, made out of common gourds, elongated like a squash or squat and fat like a melon, covered with remarkable stylized figures of men playing instruments or dancing the *cueca,* of Incas and Spaniards, of bullfighting and plowing. Entwined like friezes of fantastic foliage and houses, lakes and mountains, and animals — llamas and monkeys, tigers and parrots, burros and pumas.

No two alike, colored or cut in the particular style of the individual Indian artist.

These *guampas* are the finest things we have encountered in all our journey across the continent. They are Indian, they are genuine. And, without a qualifying or restricting phrase, they are art.

It is impossible to choose. As the women sit unconcernedly nursing their babies, we go up and down the row, stopping at each collection, sitting on our haunches. Examining, estimating, considering, bargaining. Here — look at these fine llamas: the artist has caught just the shape of their heads, their shaggy bodies, their thin legs. But did you see this one: this pale blue against the orange mountains, and this flower! And

these colors are exactly like the old Inca vases. But the best of these gourds are of the natural browns, cut away between the figures to form a white background, with a little soft color added. After seeing these, the deep red or purple ones we have seen before seem garish.

All the morning we bargain for the *guampas,* though they are ridiculously cheap: the dearest costs only forty cents. But bargaining is expected. *Trece reales, señores* — they use the old Spanish term *real,* which is ten *centavos. Caramba,* this one is well done! It has taken many days. Do you see this little monkey, so cleverly hanging from a tree which grows out of the mountain where the llamas graze? Fifteen *reales,* no more. And so they teach us the various styles: vertical lines as backgrounds for the figures; the figures outstanding only by color; silhouettes against white, or more elaborately defined. We come and go; by noon, after careful elimination, we have acquired a dozen.

All the time the market has been filled with excitement. Once the crowd has suddenly scattered before a man with a bull on the end of a rope, helplessly dragged by the animal which charges into the crowd like a fighting *toro.*

One of the painted ladies from the circus in town today creates a stir as she walks down the street in her riding habit. A policeman takes off a little boy accused of stealing. Two women are fighting, pulling each other's hair and kicking with their bare feet. A drunken Indian lurches against a stall and quietly subsides upon a mass of fallen cloth. And one of our *guampa* women, upon receiving our pound note, which is ten Peruvian *soles,* pretends she does not know what it is: coin by coin she draws out the change in silver *soles. Falta cinco* — short five. She pretends not to hear us. No more, she has no more. Then she can keep her gourds. *Espere* — and she hands us another. All the women are laughing. It is a game and they have taken sides, making every fantastic suggestion, even to the decrease in value of the *libra;* some are sure that our lady cannot count, that she should be home with

her lazy husband (all their husbands are lazy, for that matter), that she is not used to city ways. . . . All of this under a hot blue sky, with giant thunderheads coming up out of the east from the mountains, beyond which stretches the *montaña,* the hot tropical jungle about the Amazon tributaries. In this most lively of all mountain towns. . . .

Now, at five in the afternoon, the orange light slanting and beginning to fail, we sit in a *cantina* by the *plaza.* The stalls are being folded up. A Sunday afternoon anywhere. But after a different kind of day.

For every Sunday this town experiences an orgasm. Now it lies quiescent, relaxed, satiated and satisfied. After our own excitement and enthusiasm we know how they feel. By their very gestures and looks. They talk quietly and languidly. They loiter. The women with their hats on the backs of their heads. They are exhausted after this kaleidoscope of color and music and talk — after the gossip, bargaining, news, quarreling — after the sounds and smells — after the constant movement. Everything has been so bright and loud — the color, the sun, the noise — that now in the twilight it is good to relax. Left without desire, with a memory of selling or spending. It is no mere shopping excursion for

them: it is a circus better than the one at the town's outskirts, better than the bullfight advertised in the lithograph posters, even better than the movie, *Top Hat,* which has finally come to Huancayo.

The day, the action, has never been atomic: even we, as outsiders, feel its collectiveness, have been drawn into it. All of us have gone to make up this *feria,* just as one woman's skirt, bright as it is, is nothing separated from those of her friends. These people are children: all their emotions and expressions and actions reveal that fact. And for this reason they are artists, with the elastic imaginations necessary for such a creation as this market. They have made it, and not altogether unconsciously. The seeming chaos of this day has a pattern, an intricate Indian one, such as is cut upon the gourds. Children, then, but only in one sense. . . .

Thinking these thoughts, quietly having a *pisco* and a sandwich in this barroom while waiting to go to the movie, our serenity is suddenly broken by a powerful tenor voice, a bit drunken but still good. Singing *La Donna E Mobile.*

A man in a checked suit, his trousers thrust into high boots, a black hat on the back of his head and a heavy cane on his arm, comes out of an inner room, swaying and singing in bel canto style between several even more drunken friends. He catches sight of us and addresses us in German. When we tell him we are *Norteamericanos,* he changes to English. "Then you shall have a drink ♩♩♩ — what are you drinking? — a drink on me," he sings, and beckons to the bartender.

For the next hour we are bombarded by this extraordinary personality, who speaks every language with equal ease and needs only a phrase from us to start him off. Leaning with both hands against our table, he delivers a long sonorous speech in the best political-platform manner on internationality and the friendliness of all nations; then, nearly verbatim, Landon's first campaign speech which has just reached us in the Lima papers; and without stopping, changes his

pace to a long passage from Shakespeare. What is this man, an actor?

Perhaps a singer. If he were less drunk, Giovinezza, the Fascisti anthem he has burst into, would do credit to anyone. But what is this? A college football song! He explains then that he was graduated from Lehigh University. A native Peruvian, his father born in Italy, himself educated in the

States. And what is he now? A *deputado,* a Senator from Lima, he finally says. This is his state, and he is making campaign speeches before the coming election. Up here making friends, he informs us — and laughs when his Spanish-speaking companions ask what he has been saying. "I have the *alcalde's* stick," he remarks, gesturing with his cane. "When I am in town, I told him, I am the mayor, and he should go home and not molest pretty girls. Ah, in the United States there are pretty girls. . . ." — and he was off on another speech.

All the time he is enjoying himself immensely, his tongue in his cheek. Unlike most persons in his condition, he does not at all mind our laughing at him. And speaking a lan-

guage which his friends do not understand (they are too far gone to speak even their own language, in any case), he is able to say what he thinks of these small-town politicians who are entertaining him — and who will pay the bill for the drinks he insists upon ordering for us. This lawyer, now, he gestures: not a lawyer but a liar. He looks like Charles Ruggles of the movies, doesn't he? Except that he has less brains. The deputy laughs in his friends' faces. And yet he is indulgent, like a father with his children. If we are going to the movies, then they all must go, he insists. And amidst roars from his inebriated friends, he ushers us into the theater next door. There are almost no seats to be had, and in the darkness we separate to hunt for them, the Senator discussing the lamentable situation in a loud voice. The Mickey Mouse cartoon is merely the inspiration for another discourse, orated to the discomfort of all the patrons; next he booms out from somewhere in the rear that he has found three seats together and that he insists *Señores* Dickinson and Bowman join him: Where *are* the two *señores?* So we stumble back up the aisle to sit beside him, feeling more and more embarrassed as he keeps up a running comment, and yet not able to keep from laughing. When the feature starts, the first scene happens to be in pantomime. A silent picture! the Senator scoffs: that is as far as they have got in Huancayo. And gathering his flock, he departs.

This sort of person, a senator. Suppose, after this episode, we were allowed to vote. Would we re-elect him? If we are dazzled by his virtuosity, how about these simple people who do not go to Lima every day, who do not often have such a man among them? He might be a tragedy to his constituents, indeed. We feel his contempt for this game even as we admire his perfect mastery of it. There is probably no more versatile man in the Congress of Peru. But is versatility enough?

Not being Peruvian voters, we are glad we do not have to

make a decision. Pizarro is gone; it is not so simple a task to justify a swashbuckler in the twentieth century. . . .

Down towards the river this afternoon, the warm sun picks out the little storehouses on stilts, the *chosas,* which stand like elevated beehives in every field. Our sixty-four hundred mile trek is nearly over: this is our last day in Huancayo and the Andes — tomorrow we must go down to board the Japanese steamer that will take us home.

We have set out for a long walk through the rich farming valley above the town, exploring the quiet back lanes which are lined with blue-green maguey and the spindly eucalyptus. Enjoying the familiar sights and sounds and smells, glad to feel the hot dust of the lane seeping into our old shoes.

At the river which comes down from the snow-covered mountain just visible above the valley wall, we ride with a dozen men and women in the leaky ferry that an Indian plies from side to side. He stops to bail out a foot of water after each momentous crossing of some twenty yards. It is that kind of boat.

On the far side there is a wide gravel beach left by the high water. Then more hushed and dusty lanes, tree-lined, with red and yellow leaves falling through the shadows. Leaves tired of the hot, dry winter weather, ready to be replaced with the fresh green of early spring. Between the trees are fine vistas of the fresh-furrowed fields. But they are quite deserted; strangely, there is no plowing.

The few Indians who pass us have an air of suppressed excitement; they are heading back into the deeper section of the valley, and all of them, even the women, seem to be a little drunk. Their burros' ears are decorated with gay colored ribbons; white flags are stuck in every saddle, and on every hat is a bunch of fresh wildflowers.

"What is this?" we ask.

"*Santiago, señores* — feast day of the animals. A fiesta for the Indians."

Certainly we are lucky. Now, as we penetrate the back trails, with their sweet fragrance and little rivulets of water, we come unexpectedly on groups of Indians seated in the dust or lying in the fields. All of them with the bunch of flowers in their hats, all of them, men and women, drinking *chicha,* joking and laughing, freed of their shyness, talking to us whether they speak Spanish or not.

Above us is a tiny village called Pucará, perched on a hillside among the trees, its three-tiered white church tower rising above the crooked little streets that run down into these rural by-lanes. High above are just a few powder-puff clouds in the blue sky, barely moving in the quiet afternoon. There is a stillness in this warm sunshine which seems to harmonize with the greenness, the rich brown earth and the swift-running water.

Suddenly in this silence we hear a drum beating. Growing louder and louder. Then a cry: a half-wild sound. Like a child let out of school and relieving his pent-up energy. From across the fields, another cry in answer. The drum beats louder, is answered. And above this beating, which seems to come from the earth, the thin notes of a flute rise in the air. On the hill we see a man and a woman, the woman beating a small drum, chanting and hopping in time to the rhythm. Someone calls to them, and with a final shout they come dancing down the hillside to join the others. As they cross our path, the man stops for a moment.

"*Buenas tardes, señorcitos!* God be with you today! Come have a drink of *chicha* with us. Yes, *señorcitos,* you must."

Everyone who passes must have a drink of *chicha* in celebration of this day which brings good crops and kills all diseases of the animals.

"*Aqui 'sta*" — and from a great jug they pour us each a cup full of sweet *chicha,* the bottom heavy with the residue. . . .

How could they believe us if we told them we have come from a city so far away, that we have traveled more than six thousand miles westward across a continent?

A trek, using everything from ox cart to airplanes, seeming to place us above time, to see Brazil with its future, Bolivia with its present, Peru with its past. For it seems to us their problems lie in each of these tenses. Will Brazil with its polyglot population gain the foresight to develop its immense riches; will Bolivia organize at once to withstand the encroachments of more enterprising countries; and will Peru recognize the live tradition of the Incas to amalgamate her seacoast with the mountains?

Mountains which course down the spine of the continent from Panamá to Tierra del Fuego. Which stand for these Indians here, as they stood for the strength of one of the world's largest empires in the Inca's time.

The Andes. And the Indians. Classified by anthropologists, exhorted by liberals, protected by the Incas, enslaved by the Spanish, exploited or ignored by modern Peru. The Indian problem.

One grows a little weary of it, like the Padre on the ship. As he said, they are after all human beings. So few people treat them as such, the old-line politicians and the radicals alike. Paternalism, in any case. But they are descended from the Incas, who taught them to build with grey stones in their green valleys. And they remember legends more vividly

than the name of Peru's President or his words. Instead they remember the words of Pachu Mama, goddess of the earth:

"Civilizations live and die. They come from the dust, flourish a little while, and then are swallowed by the ocean. . . . When the tree trunk has sent out all its roots and has impoverished the soil, when the seed is dry and sterile, then has come the hour for the woodcutter. . . . *But who will give liberty to man? No one but man himself, through his own intelligence.*"

A NOTE ON THE DESIGN OF THIS BOOK

This book is set on the linotype in Garamond, a type face which, in this modern rendition, combines strength, power and a definite feeling of movement. This face was first cut in the sixteenth century by Claude Garamond. The letter known as Old Style is also the product of this master type designer.

The type used as chapter headings, on the title page and other front matter, is Neuland, a purely display face of great ruggedness, developed out of ancient wood-block carvings and initials, and designed by Rudolph Koch, famous designer in the modern field of sans-serif type faces.

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